



*Sharda Granth Mala-8*

*Icons of Kashmir*

# JONARAJA

***Prof. V. N. Drabu***

Publication Division

**SANJEEVANI SHARDA KENDRA**

**ANAND NAGAR, BOHRI, JAMMU PH. : 2501480**





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*Anandnagar, Bohri, Jammu-180 002*

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## A Word To The Reader

It is natural to the people living in exile in their own country, faced with decimation of their cultural icons, with their culture and history being constantly undermined to be concerned about the preservation of their ethical tradition and to make efforts for its dissemination especially to the younger generations. More than their loss of homes and hearths, land and other material positions it is the looming loss of identity that perturbs the Exiled Minority of Kashmir.

Indeed preservation of this thousands-of-years old culture is a question that should concern the whole nation of India. It haunts the people who were the only inhabitants of Kashmir a thousand years ago and have been forced into a life of exile today.

In Kashmir history this situation i.e. exile, has arisen several times during the last six or seven centuries. History, infact, has been repeating itself rather frequently in Kashmir. Hence the imperative for fortifying the identity, ethos and culture of the exiled Kashmiris is great, not only for their sake but also for the sake of national integrity.

Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra has started publication on icons, aspects, symbols and facets of the glorious ethos of Kashmir, both past and present to address these imperatives. The history, traditions and essence of Kashmir would thus be preserved and at the same time broadcast to increase the awareness of the public as well to prevent the distortionist design of defacing them.

Kashmir has been the major centre of Sanskrit language and literature. It has birthed great savants Vasugupt, Somanand, Utpaldev, Abhinav Gupt, Kshemendra, Mammat, Kalhan Pandit, Jagdhar Bhat, Bilhan, Vaman, Rudrat, Anand Vardhan, Udbhat, Kayat, Bhamah, Kshemraja, Jonaraja, Shrivara, Shuka and others. These were shaiva philosophers, scholars, thinkers, historians and grammarians who rose from the Kashmir soil established their credentials the world over and gave new directions to the society and community. The Ancient shrines, cultural centres, seats of learning, grand temples, ashrams etc. are



witness to the grand archeology and architecture of Kashmir and invite attention of the antiquarians inciting them to further investigate and inquire into this grand legacy.

As a first step towards this great endeavour of enlivening the grand traditions, throwing light on the great savants, bringing to fore the foremost icons of this glorious tradition, the Publications Division, Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra is bringing out this series of public utility, informative, introductory monographs with the twin objectives of raising public awareness level of the people and facilitating further research into the areas that are being allowed to waste into oblivion, under obvious designs. Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra's efforts are aimed at stemming this deluge threatening to drown the real identity of Kashmir.

Each of the monographs shall focus on one subject, issue, icon or symbol. Brought out on a no-profit-no-loss basis they shall be priced to be within the reach of all and shall be written in an essay comprehensible style. The aim is to present facts, life and works in simple comprehensible manner avoiding scholastic didacticism which has prevented access of the lay public to many of the grand literary, philosophical works. At the same time many artifacts of art, culture and lore have not seen the light of publication. Such facets shall also be highlighted to bring out the multifaceted character of this lore and legacy. It is hoped that the endeavour shall attain its objectives with your involvement, interest initiative and participation for in the ultimate analysis culturo-ethical endeavours are only as good as the participatory response from the general community.



## JONARAJA

*[Kalhana and his Kashmir is known to the outside world through his magnum opus, the Rajatarangini. Little do the readers know that there is another work of the same name by another Pandit called Jonaraja, who takes the account of the Medieval Kashmir to A.D. 1459. This transitional period has been lost sight of both by historians (except Vaidya) and general readers. It is a significant termination of the corrupt and weak Hindu rulers who succeeded Jayasimha and failed to improve the state of affairs, ultimately paving the way for the Muslim invaders and impostors like Shahmir who captured power and unleashed a reign of terror. Islam took root as late as A.D. 1339 which obviously suggests that there must have been strong resistance, unrecorded by the chronicles. The reigns of Shahabuddin (A.D. 1355-1373) and that of Jain-ul-Abidin (Zain-ul-Abidin) (A.D. 1420-1459) are just brief interludes in an otherwise repressive reigns of the Sultans of Kashmir, marked by chicanery and merciless persecution of the Hindus.]*

*Captious critics are well advised to scan the available source-material, both Sanskrit and Persian chronicles and even the notices of foreign writers, before making any hasty judgement or arguing the case for a peaceful spread of Islam in Kashmir. It should not be a propagandist's view of a sweet, smiling and peaceful penetration of an alien faith without bloodshed and persecution. A critic's approach has to be fair and unbiased, based on unimpeachable evidence.*

*The major portion of Jonaraja's work deals with the reign of Jain-ul-Abidin, in all taking into account the reign period of 25 rulers, 15 of whom were Hindu rulers (Kotarani being the*



last) and the rest from the reign of Shams-ud-din (Shahmir) being the Sultans of Kashmir. This epoch-making period from A.D. 1128-1459 covers more than 300 years which witnessed equally significant changes in the political and social economy of our part of the country.

Though the rise of Islam has many causes and reflected many deeply embedded social imbalances, particularly between the aghahara - beneficiaries and a rising class of Damaras, the poor defences of the land made foreign inroads of raiders and missionaries easier. A succession of weak and incompetent rulers worsened the situation further. Discord and division, political intrigues and treachery added to the troubles of Rajas. All that the rajas could manage was a defensive action against the raiders and invaders. A significant but most powerful proportion of the Damaras and Lavanyas, having been purchased by Shah Mir from Swat, the recruiting base of a raja's forces could not be easily replenished. The economic base of the state had already been weakened by apportioning several side valleys in the north and south of Kashmir to those who, instead of turning out to be loyal, were rebels. Though there are no records of the condition of the people, it seems that the peasantry, by and large must have suffered most. An unarmed and defenceless Kashmiri could hardly organise any armed resistance to the invaders and raiders. The occupation of the land by Sayeeds and other Muslims from outside Kashmir was an evil that bred prejudice and hatred. This led to their extremism and fundamentalism.

We have a clear lesson, in the words of Edmund Burke—  
'those who fail to learn from history are always destined to repeat it'.]



## Jonaraja

Jonaraja, the author of the *Rajatarangini*, lived at a time when Kashmir had already lost its independence. Jain-ul-Abidin (Zain-ul-Abidin), the eighth ruler in line of Shah Mir, succeeded to the throne of Kashmir in A.D. 1420. A land devastated by famines and floods, repression and persecution, unarmed and defenceless Kashmiris scampered about in forests, ravines and other remote places of safety. In no way did the spectacle of the *heretics* (Kashmiris unconverted to Islam) differ much from *autos-da-fe* of the Spanish Inquisition, when they had to suffer the worst persecution for upholding to their faith<sup>(1)</sup>. How could the *tout ensemble* of this tragic drama have missed the penetrating eye of Jonaraja who himself must have personally witnessed the fate of Siri Bhatta and others facing the wrath of Sikandar and taking shelter wherever such could be available. Jonaraja's conscience must have been deeply moved by what had already happened and what was happening now. Kashmir was in the crucible.

In the terminology of Yoga philosophy *asaya* means 'stock' or 'the balance of the fruits of previous works' which lie stored up in the mind in the form of mental deposits of merit or demerit (*sukha or dukha*), until they ripen in the individual soul's own experience into rank, years or enjoyment. We observe that Jonaraja was a firm believer in the fate or fortune of an individual whose virtue or vice accounted for his *prarabdharma* which made him reap or enjoy the fruits thereof.

In the *Ardhanarisvara* form two dissimilar but complementary aspects are represented in a unity. The right half represents the male principle (*purusa*) of *Siva*, while the left half represents the female principle (*prakrti* or *sakti*). It is interesting to note from the Vedic

1. Exactly 600 years after Sikandar, a similar trail of terror was let loose in Kashmir in 1990. The eyes of innocent Kashmiris like that of Prem Nath Bhat, Sarla and her husband were gouged out with red hot irons and the bodies of innocent women were sawed off on a band-saw. No less horrible was the burning alive of a few insurance employees in the insurance complex of the city. Dozens of examples could be multiplied of the savagery, and brutality with which the Kashmiri Pandits were slaughtered as at Wandahama etc. Imagine human beings in agony/screaming.



description of Siva as having two forms : malevolent and benevolent. In the *Khonamukhi grant* (Assam) of Dharmapala of Pragjyotisa, dating back to the fifth century, we find this was assumed as if to symbolize the creation where the amorous and fierce elements are coalesced, thus reflecting the thought of *Siva-Purana*. According to another story that Parvati should always live with him, embracing him limb by limb, her wish was fulfilled by Ardhanarisvara form. Jonaraja says that this *ekarupa* form of Siva, closely integrated through a mutual embrace, may be for the accomplishment of goodness and affection for all. The same form is adored in the three worlds (*trilokamahitam*). Just observe *utpreksa* in this verse.

The translation of this *mangalacarana* (invocatory verse) of Jonaraja may be rendered thus :

### मंगलाचरण

सिद्धे यत्र सति त्रपकुलमिव स्पर्धामिलाषाहते—  
रन्तर्धि वहति त्रिलोकमहितं शेषं निजार्धद्वयम् ।  
स्नेहैकीभवदाशयद्वयजयाकाङ्कीव गाढं मिल—  
देहार्धद्वयमस्तु तदभगवतोः सद्भावसम्पत्तये ॥

जो०रा० रा० ॥१६॥

### अर्धनारीश्वर की वन्दना

जिस शिवशक्ति के अर्धनारीश्वर के रूप में मानों कि लज्जावश परस्पर स्पर्धा की भावना मिट गयी एवं परम स्नेह से शिवतत्त्व एवं शक्ति-तत्त्व के दोनों तात्पर्य उस भेदभाव पर विजय प्राप्त करने की इच्छा से इकट्ठा हो गया हो, वह रूप (एकतारूप) सद्भावना प्राप्ति के लिए हो ।

(English)—Obeisance to Ardhanarisvara

May the two halves of Siva and Parvati, united very fast, in one form which is adored in the three worlds, out of mutual affection, be for your attainment of welfare. The two halves have been united, as if with a view to conquering the difference between happiness and



affliction. The other halves have disappeared as if in sorrow for not being able to unite together.

OR

Perplexed, as it were, at the absence of any longing for rivalry (of शक्तित्व over शिवतत्त्व). He, the adored Siva, of the three worlds, absorbs in His body whatever is left over. Out of attachment anxious to overcome the sense of victory (by शक्तित्व over शिवतत्त्व) by pain or pleasure or vice versa, they (Siva and Parvati) are locked in close embrace. Let the two halves of His body (*Ardhamarisvara*) so united be for the accomplishment of the good will for all" (Jona. I)

Jonaraja is not bitter. He does not complain. He simply mentions about the will of the Lord.

"One who manifests himself through *cit* (conscious) and *acit* (unconscious), whose splendour reveals itself in place, time and contact (*kalana*), whether that be *atma* (soul) Siva or Hari, Brahma or Buddha or Jina or something beyond, we bow to Him (Jona V-308).

Such a restrained emotion is expressed when Sri (as used by Jonaraja) Kota fell from power on the tenth of the bright fortnight of Śravana of the fifteenth Laukika era like a meteor from the sky.

Shahmir handed over the queen to the hangmen after being made captive. (Ibid 309). He (Shahmir) terrified the Lavanyas, spread his fame in different directions (enjoyed the earth/kingdom (*mahi*) and carried Lakshmi on his bosom" (Jona V 309).

### Jona Rajatarangini

Of more than 1300 verses, I have mainly depended upon the text, as emended by *Srikantha Kaul* and the *Jonaraja* edition of *Dr. Raghunath Singh*. I have taken into account those verses also that appear in the footnotes or appendices. The *original Sanskrit*, I am told, differs considerably from what has been translated both by Kaul and Singh, except in the restoration of main events<sup>(2)</sup>. The style of

2. Jonaraja. Kaul. S.K. (*Viśvesvarananda*) Research Institute, Hoshiarpur, 1967. *Jonaraja Rajatarangini*. Singh. R.N. 1972 Chowkhamba. Varanasi). This does not, however, dispute the authorship of Jonaraja nor the authenticity of the *Viśvesvarananda* text, updated by Kaul.



Jonaraja does not show any variation in the verses put in the appendix. It is likely that Jonaraja wrote many verses at home either to avoid the annoyance and displeasure of the Sultan or offer an affront to the Muslim clergy. Many events were rendered in verses with a pun on most of the words or as double *entendre* (*Vyanga*). That is how Jonaraja obliged Siribhatta (Sultan's minister) at whose behest he started his work and did not embarrass the Sultan either. Unlike Kalhana, he was a court poet *quite sensitive to what he recorded*.

Whereas, the main purpose has been to restore his work as a primary historical source, the overall assessment of the poet-historian has not been lost sight of. His commentaries on works like *Kiratarjuniya*, *Prithvirajavijaya* and *Mankha's Srikanthacarita* not only show his style but equally display his knowledge of statecraft. In *Srikanthacarita* particularly his familiarity with Srinagar and the life style of the people show how close he must have been to city life and the splendour that it once enjoyed. All these commentaries give us a clear insight into his style and the way he saw the events shaping themselves (*Prithvirajavijaya*). His main focus in the *Rajatarangini* has been, as the very title suggests, the king as the centre of power and how the currents rise and move in different directions. The concluding reign of Jayasimha must have impressed him of his work and strategy in subverting the rising tide of tribal brigands. And the imbecility of Jayasimha's successors made him very sad. However, more than half of his verses focus on Jain-ul-Abidin and the sudden turn in the fortune of the people. The land and the destiny of its people was, in no small measure, due to their righteous conduct determined by *karma*. That is what made Jain-ul-Abidin a *Narayana* for him come to the afflicted people as a saviour of the time. Unlike Sikandar he did not *saive qui peut* of those that sought refuge elsewhere.

### Ancestry

Jonaraja, also known as Jyotsnakara, was the grandson of Lolaraja<sup>(3)</sup> and the son of Nonaraja<sup>(4)</sup>. He talks of himself as Rajanaka in the *Srikanthacarita*. At other places, he is known as Jonaraja

3. Jona, 11-16

4. Srikantha, Sarga XXIV.



Vibudha<sup>(5)</sup>. His works follow in the order of : *Prithvirajavijaya*, *Srikanthacarita*, *Kiratarjuniya* and *Rajatarangini*. If he was a Rajanaka/Ranaka, he must surely have been a highly trusted and influential feudal baron. This is further corroborated by its definition and meaning in the *Lokaprakasa*<sup>(6)</sup>. A few Persian historians have mistakenly called him by the name *Yonaraja* and *Yavanaraja*. He was surely not a Yavana, but a very high class respectable brahman.

We do not exactly know about his birth place. Since he often talks of *Sarikapurvata* and Srinagar, it may be presumed that he was born in or somewhere near Srinagar. Since his year of birth is said to fall in the year of Sikandar butsikana's (iconoclast's) accession to the throne in A.D. 1389, it is possibly correct to say that he died at the age of 70 in 1459 corresponding to the Saptarishi Samvat of 4535<sup>(7)</sup>.

## Education

We do not know much about the early education of Jonaraja or have any information about his teachers and preceptors. But since he was a *guru* of Srivara<sup>(8)</sup>, it is certain that he had a thorough mastery of Sanskrit and had studied the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, *Bhasa*, *Bana*, *Kalidasa*, *Jayanaka* etc. His mastery in the use of *rasa* and *alamkara* and its usage and application in all his commentaries, as also in the *Rajatarangini*, do attest to his versatility. He talks of the remedies in the treatment of Shahmir's and other persons' diseases, including a thorough knowledge of *Garuda Sastra*<sup>(9)</sup>. He was equally well versed in *Yogavasistha*. His diction is superb.

Although Jonaraja talks of the campaigns of Sahab-ud-din, he however, fails to correctly locate the places like Trigarta<sup>(10)</sup> named by him. Nor does he correctly place Gandhara, Udbhandapura, Sindh, Purusavira, Nagrahara, Ghazni, Delhi, Kastavata, Rajapuri, Lohara,

5. Suka RT 1:6

6. स्थैर्यं स्थाणु राज्ञो द्वारम् उद्धहति यः सः राजानकः ।

7. Sriv.

8. Sriv 1:7.

9. Jona. 811, 812

10. Ibid. 20



Pancguhar<sup>(11)</sup>, Yoginipura. Parsi. Astanagara etc. He betrays the same lack of knowledge regarding the proper identification of Singa, Gogga, Hindugosa, Susarmapura, Sayadesa, Saloot, Madra<sup>(12)</sup> etc. Such a discrepancy does not however, occur in his knowledge of the geography and the hills, streams, forest-lands of Kashmir<sup>(13)</sup>. Obviously this reveals that, unlike Kalhana, he was not widely travelled. His belief in destiny/fate is revealed, when he talks of Kurushah in future tense<sup>(14)</sup>, implying thereby the dynastic rule of Shams-ud-din and those that followed him. Likewise he attributes the natural calamities and mishaps to the divine will. This leaves little scope for individual will and *karma*. The fate of the people is closely linked with the destiny of the ruler, as maintained by Kalhana<sup>(15)</sup> also. The good harvest, as opposed to drought (*durbhiksha*) is attributed to Suyya's<sup>(16)</sup> stars in ascendancy and change in people's fortunes. On the destruction of righteous deeds, kings fall and good kings come only with the good deeds of their subjects. And Suhabhatta was snatched by death only through the rising graph of peoples rise in their righteousness<sup>(18)</sup>. Because of the malevolent influence of Kali, *adharma* increases and the country is visited by unforeseen calamities<sup>(19)</sup>. The kings indulge in wanton destruction of idols due to the adverse fate of the people<sup>(20)</sup>. Famines too occur because of of this<sup>(21)</sup>! Sins and virtues of kings and subjects alike are again interlinked. That is how he interprets the submerging of a flourishing town in Mahapadmasara<sup>(21)</sup>.

### Jonaraja's Perception

Unlike Kalhana, Jonaraja seems not to display any sense of

11. Ibid 375, 372, 374, 379, 380, 377, 383, 76, 95, 81, 132, 384, 386
12. Ibid 376, 833, 382, 686, 380, 830, 835, 714, 717, 730
13. Jona 76, 92, 107, 322, 410
14. Ibid 135 ff
15. Stein, I, 87, IV 30
16. Jona 875-876
17. Ibid 875ff
18. Ibid 680, Accordingly to *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, Suhabhatta died of consumption (see Post Timur India 2:516).
19. Ibid 597
20. Ibid 358, 926-931
21. Ibid, 926-31, 358.



patriotism. Whereas Kalhana loved each and every atom of Kashmir and its soil as a holy land, the same feeling is strangely absent in Jonaraja. Was it because the land had been polluted by the *mlecchas*. Unlike the mediaeval bards of Rajasthan and their folk songs, he could not inspire his own people with a strong sense of patriotism or use *vira-rasa* in his Kavya to instil a strong sense of awareness of a calamitous situation that needed human exertion to face the evil as was done by the valiant Rajputs. Was Jonaraja deaf and blind to all the occurrences and events around him? Surely not! He seems to have been reconciled to destiny but not compromised to historical facts. Patriotic sentiments could not be freely expressed with the same exuberance as was done by the poet historian Kalhana for limitations imposed by the changed times and *dramatis personae*. It does not mean that he was not animated by noble sentiments, but sentiment unchecked by reason is a bad guide. Jonaraja was discreet to avoid any unpleasant situation but judicious to strike a note of concord. (See *Ardhanarisvara*).

Jonaraja was an eye witness to a sickening drama around him. Kashmir was now a changed place—a *mleccha desa*. The Turkish Sultans were not an indigenous lot. They were Muslims from outside and the subjects had been forcibly, under various threats, guile and false persuasions, converted to Islam. Jonaraja was confronted with a predicament. Whom to address and how to address them? A large majority would not follow his language nor would they take him seriously as neo-converts under compulsion. How could they change the kaleidoscope of a decadent and atrophied Kashmir? What option, if any, was left to him to appeal to his people for a change in view of a *fait accompli*? Might he have not been charged with treason? And very few brahmans were left either to understand his idiom and language or forced to revolt against the newly established system of government. The Sultan claimed his authority to rule as a Khalifa of the Holy Prophet. Under such a vicious atmosphere, Jonaraja could not try for a change. Would he have not been held guilty of disloyalty and blasphemy? Where were the people to listen to his piteous appeals for some type of a revolutionary change? Whatever he, therefore,



wrote was either to chronicle the events of different regions or to convey his suppressed feelings in a subdued tone. Jonaraja had an unbiased approach. He did not disparage any religion or faith. He was not a bigot. He was above the feelings of Hindu-Muslim bias. He was eclectic in outlook and had no proclivities for any particular faith. His integrity is beyond doubt, unequalled in the annals of medieval Indian history.

It was not an easy task to rise above passion and prejudice for which he stands foremost and is rare in the list of medieval historiographers of Kashmir, particularly at a time of turbulence and turmoil. What also distinguishes Jonaraja from his predecessor Kalhana is his penetrating eye on the events outside the limits of Kashmir. Porus, Chandragupta Maurya, Samudragupta, Skandagupta, Sasanka, or a philosopher like Sankara do not find any place in the chronicle of Kalhana. Nor do the republics of Liccavis, Vijjis, Yaudheyas, figure there. Why is Kalhana silent on the rise of Islam in Afghanistan and oblivious of the Muslim conquest of Persia and Turkistan by the Arabs? But Jonaraja's canvas is wider and he is fully conscious of the changes that are taking place in other parts of India, be it the Tughlaks, Lodhis or Timur. How very dexterously he spins out the relations between the Sultans of Delhi and those of Kashmir and the fall out of Timur's invasion. Such developments do, of course, require a critical appraisal and assessment (so far ignored) by the historians of India (interested in the catastrophic events of medieval India) to interpret certain events most critically and not simply through, the lens of a Marxist's or materialists' glasses. Jonaraja has thus to be studied in the context of the rise of the Turks, their entry into Kashmir and their round of activities in different spheres of social and political life of the land.

### Jayasimha (A.D. 1128-1155)

Jonaraja picks the thread of the *Rajatarangini* (the River of Kings) with the last six years of Jayasimha's reign<sup>(22)</sup> (A.D. 1149-1155). Jayasimha, the son and successor of Sussala, had organised a

22 Jona 27-38. All references here, as in the following pages, are, unless stated otherwise, from Raghunath Singh's edition of the *Rajatarangini* (1972).



confederacy of the hilly chieftains to stem the tide of the advancing horde of the Muslims. The very presence of the envoys of Govind Chandra of Kanauj and Aparaditya of Konkan at his court lends support to this view<sup>(23)</sup>. The five hundred strong cavalry force dispatched by Raja Mallacandra of Nagarkot and the additional recruits from the the rulers of the Punjab<sup>(24)</sup> against the Ghaznavide Sultans indicates how heavy the odds against Jayasimha<sup>(25)</sup> were. If the Persian chronicles are to be relied upon, Jayasimha seems to have been killed in one such encounter against the Muslims. Jonaraja is, however, silent regarding the end of this ruler (A.D. 1155 = Laukika 4230)<sup>(26)</sup>.

### Paramanuka

Paramanuka (A.D. 1155-1164), also known as Srimat Paramanda was elected king by the people after his father's death<sup>(27)</sup> Pakhli, Kishtwar, Rajouri and a few rulers of little Tibet assumed independence mainly due to the treachery of Bhishayaka, Janaka and Prayaga - most probably the ministers or courtiers of the king. Paramanuka's stupidity seems to have been main,ly responsible for it. Jonaraja mentions the exact date of his death in A.D. 1164 (Laukika 4240) after a total reign period of nine years, six months and ten days<sup>(28, 29)</sup>.

### Vantideva

Jonaraja simply mentions and dismisses in one verse the death (A.D. 1164-1171) of Vantideva, the son and successor of Paramanuka in A.D. (1171), Saptarisi 4247<sup>(30)</sup>. His identification with Avantideva on the basis of a single coin is doubtful and looks spurious<sup>(31)</sup>.

23 Srikantha XXV 110.

24 *Waqlat-i-Kashmiri*, MS 24, *Hassan*, II. 152

25 Jona 33-36

26 Ibid 38

27 Ibid V 38

28 Ibid V 39: Tapar Stone Inscription (S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar) asada suti 15. Srimata Paramanda rajye va: Laukiha 4233 AD 1157: *Ain-i-Akhari* mentions one Harmanak (AD 1154-1164) instead of Paramanuk.

29 Ibid V 48.

30 Ibid V 49:

31 *Coins of Med. India*, Cunningham, p 46 plate: Coin No. 31.



## Vopadeva

The Pauras<sup>(32)</sup> (folk assemblies) elected Vopadeva as the successor of Vantideva. He probably belonged to some influential section of the Lohara dynasty or was related to it. He is alternately known as Vuppadeva<sup>(32)</sup>. An imbecile, how ridiculous he must have looked when feeding stones with milk and exhilarating in their presence!<sup>(33)</sup> Once he visited Suresvari (Isbar) in the company of his ministers. Enroute his journey by boat he is said to have lost his pearl-studded ring in the water that reflected his distorted image/complexion, which made him all the more angry, pointing of course, foolishly to the ripples of the lake<sup>(34)</sup>. While Jonaraja gives a total period of nine years, four months and seventeen days of his reign, the same has not been inflated by *Ain-i-Akbari* by two days, as supposed by some scholars<sup>(35)</sup>. Surprisingly, Jonaraja doesn't mention anything about the control of Ghazna by the Ghoris in A.D. 1176 and political upheavals on the borders of the north west of India.

### Jassaka (A.D. 1181-1199)<sup>(36)</sup>

Jassaka (Vuppadeva's brother) was raised to the throne by a section A.D. 1181-1199 of the feudal levies, called Lavanyas (*Sriv* 4:415; *Jona* V 56) which suggests that Jassaka might have died childless and any of the surviving claimants from his line was probably banished to Rajapuri (mod. Rajouri). His uneventful reign of twelve years has been covered just in nine *slokas*. The treachery of his uterine brother Ksuksa and that of Bhima has been highlighted by the chronicler<sup>(37)</sup>. Jassaka passed away after eighteen years and thirteen days (*Laukika* 4274 / A.D. 1199) which fully agrees with the date

32 *Sriv*, 413; *Jona* V 450.

33 *Jona*, V 51.

34 *Ibid* V 52-54.

35 Hassan is wrong in stating that he ascended the throne in AD 1232.

36 **Note : Vuppadeva** : The Pauras seem to have been folk assemblies from various units of Kashmir Mandala. Together with mantris, Brahman assemblies and purohita corporations, they seem to have constituted an electoral body for the election of the king. The election of the stupid rulers suggests that it had suffered considerably in its functions.

37 *Jona* vv 58-61.



given in *Ain-i-Akbari*. Jonaraja, however, has nothing to say about the activities of Mohd. Ghori whose attack on the Punjab, with the collusion of Raja Candradeva and his son Vijayadeva and again in A.D. 1186 was of crucial significance in the neighbourhood and vicinity of Kashmir.<sup>(38)</sup>

### Jagadeva (A.D. 1199-1213)<sup>(39)</sup>

Jagadeva who ascended the throne of Kashmir in A.D. 1199 won the affection and support of his people through his noble deeds. He was like a surgeon for his afflicted people but due to the treachery and machinations of some disaffected ministers was banished from his kingdom<sup>(40)</sup>. However, through the unfailing trust of his minister, Gunarahula, was soon restored to power<sup>(41)</sup>. He has been credited with the building of Harasesvara Temple in Khonamusa. His reign was again cut short by the perfidy of the wicked Dvarapati (Warden of the Marches / Lord of the Gate) Padma who poisoned him to death<sup>(43)</sup>.

He reigned for a total period of fourteen years, six months and three days. He died in Laukika 4289 - A.D. 1213. *Ain-i-Akbari* falls short of four months in reckoning *the same reign period*.

### Rajadeva A.D. 1213-1236<sup>(45)</sup>

Internecine warfare and mutual dissensions had again led to anarchy and instability in Kashmir. This is one of the reasons why Rajadeva had taken shelter in Kashtavata owing to his father's loss of trust in him. He was brought to Kashmir by the adversaries of Dvaresht<sup>(46)</sup> and loyal supporters from Vanaparsva pargana in Liddari. His entry in Salhana fortress led to immediate trouble in which Padma

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38 Ibid 64.

39 Ibid 65-75.

40 Ibid v 68.

41 Ibid v 69-72.

42 Ibid v 73.

43 Ibid v 74..

44 Ibid v 75.

45 Ibid v 76-87.

46 Ibid v 76.



ambushed him<sup>(47)</sup> and the Dvaresh was killed in the encounter. But Bhattas alone came to support the king who had to buy peace by parcelling out his kingdom between Lavanyas and dreadful Baladyacandra Damara of Lohara<sup>(48)</sup>. The truce could not last long as the Bhattas were on the look out for installing some Khasa as the ruler of Kashmir. The Raja's rigorous action against these Bhattas led to an outcry of '*na bhattoham*' (I am not a mercenary)<sup>(49)</sup>. The king's reign lasted for twenty-three years, three months and twenty seven days<sup>(50)</sup>.

### Samgramadeva A.D. 1236-1252<sup>(51)</sup>

Sangramadeva, the son and successor of Rajadeva, attempted to preserve the shaky independence of Kashmir against very heavy odds. Surya, his brother, was appointed as Pratinidhi (Yuvaraja incumbent), a very influential and prestigious position amongst ministers. He rewarded his master with treachery and sought the help of Lohara ruler to oust his brother. Added to it was the turbulence, caused by the secret intrigues of Kalhana's successors which led further to Tunga's (the chief of Samala) disaffection. Through his discretion he got Surya killed by *vitas* (agents of prostitutes) and had Tunga chastised. But the king had to take shelter in Rajapuri before quelling the rebellious and treacherous elements<sup>(52)</sup>. He met his end at the hands of Kalhana's successors whom he had tried to restore to dignity and pacify in vain<sup>(53)</sup>. This period deserves a critical study in view of the subversion at home, and the atrocities of the Damaras<sup>(54)</sup>, and the rise of Iltutmish and Razia outside Kashmir and the establishment of Balban's rule after his successful occupation of and victory over Malwa. Chanderi and Narwar (A.D. 1251- 1252).

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47 Ibid v 78.

48 Ibid v 80-83.

49 Ibid v 84

50 Ibid v 87

51 Ibid v 88-104.

52 Ibid v 95

53 Ibid v 102. His end came in Laukika 4328 AD 1252 after 16 years and 10 days.

54 All through his period of our survey; the Damaras, far from being loyal, though wedded to martial traditions, accelerated the fall of Kashmir.



### Ramadeva (A.D. 1252-1273)<sup>(55)</sup>

He avenged the death of his father. The only event of any significance is the construction of Samudramatha (Sudur)<sup>(56)</sup> by his queen and his adoption (being childless) of a brahman boy Lakshmana from Bhishavakapura. He passed away after a reign of twenty-one years, one month and thirteen days.

### Lakshmadeva (A.D. 1273-1286)<sup>(57)</sup>

This adopted son of Ramadeva patronized brahmans. His wife Ahla built the Susrumatha on the banks of the Vitasta<sup>(58)</sup>. Kajjala, a Turuska, intruded into Kashmir with a contingent of armed forces, letting loose a train of terror and plunder. Scholars place his incursion in A.D. 1287. He passed away in Laukika 4362 (reign period: 13 years, 3 months and 12 days).

### Simhadeva (AD 1286-1301)<sup>(59)</sup>

Kajjal's inroads into Kashmir confined Laksmadeva's rule to Liddari. If *Baharistan-i-Shahi* is to be believed, Simhadeva was the son of Laksmadeva. Simhadeva was attacked by Samgramadeva. In both his conduct and composition of poems he stands comparison with Harsa, though not otherwise.

The most notable event of his reign is the ritual bath of the idol of Vijayesvari from a pond of milk that the ruler had purchased for 100000 *nishkas*<sup>(60)</sup>. Though devoted and pious, he fell a victim to the intrigues of the wicked that ultimately led to his tragic end. His reign lasted fourteen years five months and twenty seven days (Laukika 4377- A.D. 1301)

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55 Jona vv 105-112.

56 Ibid v 111

57 Ibid v 113-117.

58 Ibid v 115, 116-118.

59 Ibid v 118-129. Some scholars give the date as AD 1387 and identify him as Khusrro (see Marco : 1:104. note 4.

60 Ibid : v 122. it seems that an abundant quantity of milk was obtained daily for the virtual bath of the Vijayesvara idol. This is in sharp contrast to the acts of Harsa who desecrated most of the idols.



## Sahadeva A.D. 1301-1320<sup>(61)</sup>

Simhadeva's brother, Suhadeva, ascended the throne of Kashmir with the help of Kamasuha<sup>(62)</sup>. Through his short sighted policy and misplaced generosity many foreign elements forced their entry into Kashmir in search of employment<sup>(63)</sup>. Of these Shahrin was one, who claimed his descent from Babhravahana, the son of Arjuna—a noble family of Rajputs<sup>(64)</sup>. Since the political instability and the menace of the Mongols and the Turks in the north and north west of India posed a recurrent threat, this encouraged Dulchu<sup>(65)</sup>, the commander-in-chief of Karamasena to march into Kashmir with a cavalry force of sixty thousand to ravage this land. Instead of facing the challenge Sahadeva bribed him with money and taxed the people against which the brahmins started a fast unto death (*praya*)<sup>(66)</sup>. Rincana tried to win Kalamanyas whom he ultimately decimated through treachery. To save his skin he entered Kashmir along with his followers. Jonaraja rightly says that he was a Rahu<sup>(67)</sup> for Kashmir and Suhadeva, a Rakshasa. Kashmir had to suffer under the tyranny of all those predators and bear an excessive burden of taxation caused by the ravages of both Dulcha and Rincana. Most of them fled their land and sought shelter elsewhere to save themselves like fledgelings from the clutches of a kite / an eagle. Many others were sold as slaves or made prisoners<sup>(68-69)</sup>. Dulchu had ultimately to leave because of a severe winter through the passage of Tarabal. Rincana was a monster of cruelty with no qualms of conscience whatsoever. All filial and paternal relations were lost through this period of unheard depredations, loot and plunder<sup>(70)</sup>, adversely affecting the economy of the state. Everyone feared grave trouble for the king near Gagangiri where

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61 Ibid vv 130-133.

62 Ibid v 130.

63 Ibid v 131.

64 Ibid vv 132 ff.

65 Ibid vv 142 ff.

66 Ibid v 145.

67 Kalamanyas were perhaps Bhautas.

68 Jona v 153.

69 Ibid v 157. Many Kashmiris were sold into slavery (v 158).

70 Ibid v 159 ff.



Rincana stayed for some time<sup>(71)</sup>. Having faced a tough resistance from Ramacandra, Rincana used guile and in the guise of a cloth merchant in the vicinity of Laharkot, swooped upon him and killed him. He took possession of Lahara (now Lar) and got hold of Kotadevi as well.

Suhadeva was so scared by the menace of Rincana that he was forced to flee Srinagar to Sopore (Srgala Pramandala). His total reign period, lasted nineteen years, three months and twenty five days. This period marks a watershed in the history of Kashmir and needs a thorough analysis of the events.

Rincana, after having killed Ramacandra, took the reins of government into his own hands. With an iron hand he suppressed all opposition and made a short shrift of the Lavanyas<sup>(72)</sup>. His equal handed justice became proverbial and has been eulogized both by Jonaraja and Persian chroniclers<sup>(73)</sup>. It is doubtful whether he accepted Islam. Once he was refused initiation, being a Bhauta, by Devasvamin<sup>(74)</sup>, a Saiva, he must have continued with his previous faith. By now Muslims who had settled in Kashmir and planted their own colonies came to his support. Claiming him to be Nasir-ud-din, he was duly honoured by them. Whether his authority was acknowledged by a large section of society is quite doubtful. Did he occupy the throne and meet with determined opposition? This seems to be possibly so? Udayanadeva, perhaps the brother of Simhadeva, organised effective resistance against him with the support of Tukka Baudhas. Though grievously wounded by these Tukkas, he feigned death and marched to Srinagar after his recovery<sup>(75)</sup>. Those who had hatched a conspiracy against him were brutally done to death, even pregnant women not being spared<sup>(76)</sup>. Shahmir, as referred to above, was not a part of the conspiracy against him. He won the confidence of Rincana who

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71 Ibid 165.

72 Ibid vv 176 ff.

73 Ibid vv 179, 181-184, 192

74 Ibid vv 193 ff

75 Ibid vv 195 ff.

76 Ibid vv 207-211.

77 Ibid vv 213-214.



entrusted Kotarani born son, Haidar to his care. As he did not fully convalesce, he finally succumbed to his injuries in Laukika 4399<sup>(78)</sup> A.D. 1323. His conversion to Islam has remained a moot point—a mystery, perhaps because he did not divulge his inner secrets under the camouflage of being a Muslim when he knew that he had to rule over still a sufficiently large number of Hindus in Kashmir<sup>(79)</sup>. Shahmir instead of assuming power, was shrewd enough to hand it over to Kota Rani and Udayanadeva. He watched the developments closely from a distance.

### Udayanadeva (A.D. 1323-1339)<sup>(80)</sup>

How Udayanadeva, a fugitive in Gandhara, was able to acquire the throne of Kashmir and get the hand of Kota Rani and what relation he bore to Suhadeva needs to be thoroughly researched. Both Jonaraja and Persian chroniclers are silent on this point. Some Persian chroniclers surmise that Udayanadeva was the brother of the deceased Suhadeva<sup>(81)</sup>. Others say that he had been despatched to Gandhara-Swat to bribe Dulca. He was recalled from Swat. These threads pieced together would suggest that all the time he must have been busy seeking the support of his allies to regain the throne of Kashmir. This he ultimately managed to do once Rincana had been fatally wounded and succumbed to his injuries after a fierce encounter. Sensing these troubles and their fall out, Kota seems to have been shrewd enough not to accept the throne even for her minor son after the death of her husband. She chose to marry Udayanadeva rather than to claim the throne for her son, Haidar (a pretender in the eyes of the people). One may ask: was she aware of the susceptibilities of her subjects, a large section of whom must have felt sore over the loss of their land's independence and the havoc wrought by the inroads of Dulchu and Rincana? Kota's discretion was the better part of her valour. Personal courage would have been of no avail.

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78 Ibid v 220.

79 This (His) graveyard in Srinagar has not been identified, though one such is claimed by Muslims in the vicinity of Ali Kadal and Navakadal on the right bank of the Vitasta.

80 Jona. v 223.

81 Ibid vv 223 ff.



This interregnum helped Shahmir to closely watch the fast changing political scenario. With his sharp acumen he played upon the modesty and simplicity of Udayanadeva against whom he did not raise any insurrection. He managed to get Kramarajya (Kamraj) for his sons Jamshed and Ali Shah, thus strengthening his base of operations through the chess board of diplomacy.

Raja Udayanadeva virtually left the reins of administration in the hands of his queen consort Kotadevi. He devoted himself to acts of piety. He almost became a Srotiya brahman and had tinkling bells strung around the neck of his horses and the gold of his treasure melted to adorn the crown of Cakradhara in Semthan in Vijabror (distr. Anantnag). His extreme and rigorous policy of *ahimsa* turned a volte-face in body politic. And that too when Kashmir was at the cross roads of history, a turning point in its fortune and the future of the land, when he should have got into the swing of things. Why was it so? Had Udayanadeva read the writing on the wall, when outside Kashmir, there was an upsurge of Islam in and around Gandhara-Swat. Was he reconciled to the inevitable? Had he a premonition of Acala's momentous actions and incursion into Kashmir. Was not assistance of the ruler of Mugadhpur to Acala any way less severe and devastating than the raids of Dulchu, a little earlier? How otherwise is one to explain his flight to Bhuttadesa, Kota being left to face single handed the impetuosity in battle in a short while. She dissuaded Acala from wading through pools of blood and had Khe Rincana installed on the throne of Kashmir!<sup>(82)</sup> Instead of fulminating against Acala, she won him over through sagacity and saw to it that Udayanadeva returned home, after having offered his prayers to Tusaralinga. One of her sons, Jatta, (born to Udayanadeva) was entrusted to the care of her minister Bhikshana and the other (from Rincana) called Haidar to Shah Mir, thus maintaining a delicate balance between the two. Although Shahmir had risen to the post of a Dvarapati, he was kept at

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82 Would it be possible to cobble Kashmir together? Would it be possible to have a Kashmir where war is not possible? Is it possible to have a Kashmir where citizens are citizens because they feel Kashmir in their hearts and not because they were born there. They had a physical land, but did not have a nationality. This was the dilemma of Kota Rani. Her real insight was born out of trauma.



an arms distance both by the Queen and Udayanadeva. The interval was not missed by the ever active, agile and cunning Shahmir. He successfully raised a band of loyal followers by his matrimonial alliances with all important functionaries, including the Damaras. Alisher's daughter was married to Lushta. He had his firm hold on Samkarapura that was maintained at the cost of a nominal exchequer, besides the expense of his own feudal levy that was mostly recruited from a band or his own loyal Muslims from outside. His own grand daughter was married to Tailak Sura, the chieftain of Bhangila. Samala too was under his control. He raised taxes from Karal Pargana. In fact a sort of dual control came to be exercised in Kashmir. Whereas the outlying parts of Srinagar and side-valleys were under the control of Shahmir and his cohorts, the central city of Srinagar was under Kotarani and the nominal rule of her husband. On the coaxial line functioned Shahmir and Kotarani. In such an anomalous situation, power had already slipped from the control of Kotarani. A strange feudal structure was in place, Shahmir being no mere vassal and Kotarani just a nominal feudal superior. The adjoining Parganas were under the exclusive control of Shahmir and his faithful allies, now his nearest relatives. Including Vijayesvara he had all the military commanders (virtually the feudal barons) won over through matrimonial alliances. Commander Lakshma's daughter was married to Ala-ud-Din, the son of Shahmir. The latter had offered his daughter Gohra to Kota-raj. Lavanyas' loyalty was purchased through gold and diplomacy; and most of them were netted through matrimonial alliances. How beautifully and sarcastically Jonaraja observes; "Lavanyas adorned their necks with the garland of Shahmir's daughters and grand daughters, little realizing that these very beads of their necklaces would turn into very poisonous snakes."<sup>(83)</sup> Other Lavanyas were similarly bought over, thus commanding the resources of their agricultural produce and its surplus.

"Udayanadeva's fortress was like a tree surrounded by lumps of loose clay and water-clogged all around", remarks the poet-historian Jonaraja. Udayanadeva breathed his last in Laukika 4414. What an irony of fate, that the king should die on the day of Sivaratra, thus

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83 Jona v 259.



heralding the dawn of a new era, temporarily eclipsed by a brief duration of the last Hindu Queen, Kota Rani who fought desperately but in vain to save the remnants of a crumbling throne.

The feudal system of Kashmir during this period needs a critical study.

### **Kota Devi (A.D. 1339)<sup>(84)</sup>**

That the Queen had to keep Udayanadeva's death a secret for about four days very clearly suggests that she understood how very quickly Shahmir would react, being left with no choice but to act as the regent of her minor son. The elder one was already in the custody of Shahmir. The Rani's last bid was to collect the recalcitrant Lavanyas thought to be loyal to her. Who knows she might fall a captive to Shahmir? She made Bhatt Bhikshana her minister and played her cards well.

How could Shahmir miss the opportunity : now or never. He feigned illness. When Autara and Bhatta Bhikshana were sent to ask about his state of health, they were taken aback and killed unawares by the cunning Shahmir. The Rani could not avenge the death of her ministers and take Shahmir into custody because of the treachery of those that had already been won over and purchased by him. The insidious disease of harbouring the cunning and crafty added to her troubles. Her Kampanadhipati (Commander in chief) played a treacherous role. He made her captive. Her release was secured by her faithful secretary (*Saciva*), Kumarabhatta. The Rani was in a predicament how to deal with Shahmir who had no cause for disaffection. She could not punish the seditionists for she well knew that even her most trusted supporters had already been purchased by traitor Shahmir and a ring of conspiracy had enmeshed her. Most of the Kashmiris failed to understand the inevitable. When at Andarkot

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84 Ibid v 264-306. Kota knew that Kashmir was falling apart. Hers was one of the few voices in those turbulent times which attempted to keep Kashmir together. But political forces conspired and her voice was drowned as various parts of Kashmir virtually seceded from her control. Many of them were torn by war and strife.



(Jayapidapura) on state business and to muster support, Shahmir took Srinagar by force and after having besieged Andarkot took her captive<sup>(86)</sup>. His marriage proposal (of a 40 year old queen by a 70 year old person) having been turned down, she was treacherously murdered<sup>(85)</sup>. How could the Kashmiris forestall such a move when the flamboyant and arrogant Damaras, Lavanyas and Dvaradesa had turned traitorous.

The charms and ravishing beauty of the Central Asian virgins had enthralled them. The blight of treason and infidelity had its own malignant influence that obscured their vision of a free and independent Kashmir. Kota's was an abortive attempt to unite the feudal bands against sedition and treason.

#### **Shahmir (A.D. 1339-1342)<sup>(87)</sup>**

Assuming the name of Shams-u-din 'the Sun of the Faith' Shahmir ascended the throne of Kashmir in A.D. 1339. Having killed his rivals, Kota's sons, he put down the Lavanyas and had most of the supporters of the Queen hunted out from Kastavata. He handed over the reins of administration to his two sons. He passed away in Laukika 4418, after a brief reign period of just over three years.

#### **Jamshed (A.D. 1342-44)<sup>(88)</sup>**

Jamshed was the second Sultan of Kashmir after the death of his father. Having obtained the consent of his foremost *Samantas*, he started his rule with the assistance of his younger brother, Alisher<sup>(89)</sup>. This seems to be quite apocryphal since the latter soon gained the confidence of a section of the other *Samantas*. He reached Avantipur, Jamshed, sensing trouble reached Utpalapur and opened negotiations.

85 That she was made to share his bed for one night, after being married to him legally is a myth cleverly manipulated by some chroniclers just to legitimize the rule of Shahmir. Why was she then treacherously murdered?

86 Ibid v 309.

87 Jona v 307-315: 1a v 309.

88 Ibid v 316-338.

89 Ibid v 328 ff. This has been supported by *Tarikh-i-Kashmir* (Ms. Munich: 54A) but controverted by *Tabqat-i-Akbari* (III 427).



These having failed, he marched ahead. Jamshed's attempt to kill the Kampanadhipati (C-in-C) seems to have been foiled. Alisher defeated his brother's son and advanced further from Avantipur to Ikshika<sup>(90)</sup> via Kshiripatha. Having recourse to treachery, he soon occupied Srinagar with the help of Sadhyaraja, a minister of Jamshed. The unlucky Jamshed's rule lasted for less than two years.

### **Ala-ud-din (Allesvara) A.D. 1344-1355**

The only notable event of this Sultan is the transfer of his capital to Jayapdapura. A terrible famine overtook Kashmir in A.D. 1343-1344 (Laukika 4419).

His reign lasted for twelve years and eight months. It is surprising that Jonaraja has totally ignored the chronicling of events from A.D. 1343-1354. Naturally our anxiety stems from feeling uncomfortable about the fate of the people who, it appears, might have been forced into slavery or else made to change their religion with no option left to save themselves from starvation, hunger and scarcity of goods.

### **Shihab-ud-din A.D. 1355-1373<sup>(91)</sup>**

Shihab-ud-din succeeded his father Ala-ud-din. Jonaraja considers him to be a reincarnation of Lakshmi's son—an ideal ruler. He has been compared to Lalitaditya and Jayapida. He had gained considerable experience in warfare as a Dvarapati. Immediately after his accession, he set out on an expedition of conquering the quarters (*digvijaya*). He had Sahayaka, Candra, Lolaka and Sura as his commanders. He conquered Udbhandapura (Ohind) and married the daughter of Sindhupati. Gandhara acknowledged his supremacy. The valiant Singas (?) were subdued. Hastnagar residents were overcome with fear. He conquered Purushavihara (Peshawar) and Nagarahara and marched upto Hindughosh (Hindu Kush) and then made a detour of the Beas. He defeated the raja of Sushamapura and subjugated the Bhautas.

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90 Ikshika is the name of the village Pacchgom in Nagam Pargana.

91 Jona vv 360-468.



Jonaraja next relates the odyssey of his love, his flirtations and subsequent marriage with Lasa, the sister of Lakshmi to whom he was legally married. He turned down the suggestion of his ministers to melt the bronze image of Kesava as an act of vandalism. The land was overtaken by a terrible flood which forced people to take shelter on the upper reaches of hills. He is credited with having founded the city of Shahab-ud-dinpur (called Shadipur). He was an ideal king for Jonaraja, free from bigotry and extreme orthodoxy. How much did the land owe to divine forces is again clear from the interpretation of his dream regarding a Gandharvanagari. The Sultan was highly pleased with the mysterious dream narrated to him. Since his sons could not approach his father in time, he had Hindu Khan anointed as his future successor. He died in Laukika 4449 A.D. 1373.

### **Qutub-ud-din A.D. 1373-1389<sup>(92)</sup>**

Hindu Khan ascended the throne under the title of Qutub-ud-din (Sie. Quddadin). His father had failed to ensure the safety of Lohara because of the tremendous force of Loharadhipati. The Sultan despatched Lola Damara to besiege Lohara. Thinking that resistance was of no avail, the Lohara chief sent brahman envoys to negotiate peace<sup>(93)</sup>. But Lola made them captive. As a desperate step, the Loharendra together with his followers consigned themselves to flames<sup>(93-94)</sup>. Having opened the doors of Loharakot, they hurled boulders on Lola that not only covered his body but wounded him badly also. The Sultan recalled Shahab-ud-din's son, Hassan Khan, who advanced upto Madrarajya. He intended to return once the message of his father's death was conveyed to him. But persuaded by Udaya, Sri and Lola Damara's wife to inveigle the Sultan into her place, the conspirators failed to execute their plan. Hassan was sent back. Udayasri, was compensated for his past services<sup>(94)</sup> without being taken captive or being done to death. But once Udayasri wanted to join hands with Hassan, he was made a prisoner and then executed.

92 Ibid vv 464-537.

93 Jona vv 473ff. Johar is a Rajput practice of immolation through fire when all other means of saving their honour and those of their queens had failed.

94 Ibid 493 ff.



Khasas betrayed Hassan and had him executed by the King<sup>(95)</sup>. Near normalcy having been restored, he founded the city of Qutub-ud-din pura (now covered by Langarhatta and Mir Modh. Haji mohallas) Jonaraja observes that the Sultan begot a son in his ripe old age through the blessings of Yogi Brahmanatha<sup>(96)</sup>.

Baptized as Srngara, he came to be known and earned the opprobrium of Sikandar. Butsikan (Sikandar, the Iconoclast). The Sultan breathed his last in A.D. 1389 = Laukika 4490, when Sikandar was just eight years old.

### **Sikandar Butsikan A.D. 1389-1413<sup>(97)</sup>**

Subhatta, the mother of Sikandar, became the regent of her minor son. She administered the land with the assistance of her ministers, Udaka and Sahaka. Qutub-ud-din had another son, named Haibat Khan. Lest any dispute of succession should arise, Udaka, at the suggestion of the queen had his son-in-law killed together with his wife. Udaka was terribly upset and had his other colleague Sahaka also done to death, Sikandar was naturally unnerved and so left for Holda. He suspected foul play after Udaka's sudden departure for Bhautadesa to muster support. The suspicion was further confirmed when Udaka, on his return, had Subhatta's brother, Khujya Raja, also killed. The Sultan's followers went in hot pursuit of Udaka. They confronted him at Pampore (Padampura). Udaka's soldiers now started moving from Ballamatha (Diddamara-Srinagar). Once they espied a horde of buffaloes across the river Vitasta, they mistook it as the cavalry corps of the enemy. Frightened, they took to heels and were pursued by Sikandar who had these rebels imprisoned and then returned to Srinagar<sup>(98)</sup>. Udaka too was taken prisoner. He committed suicide of his own. The Sultan also overpowered the Palas and cleared the land of his enemies. Before he could start on his conquest of different places, news came that Timur (the lame) had plundered Delhi<sup>(99)</sup>. The

95 Ibid vv 505-517.

96 Ibid vv 531 ff.

97 Ibid vv 538-612.

98 Ibid vv 553-555.

99 Ibid v 561 ff.



latter sent two elephants as a token of friendship to the Sultan.

To start with, Sikandar emulated the example of his predecessors and engaged himself in acts of piety and charity. Having learnt of his liberality scores of Muslims turned to Kashmir to share his bounty and receive his liberal gifts and alms<sup>(100)</sup>. They not only enjoyed his patronage, but also secured entrance to the interior chambers of the Sultan's palace. He was fully brainwashed by the *mullahs*, *maulvis*, *pirs*, *dervishes* etc. from outside and took keen interest in what was dinned into his ears as the basic tenets of Islam. This further whetted his religious zeal. Missionary activity combined with the Sultan's liberality impacted on his unbiased but obsequious personality. Mir Mohd. Sayeed Hamadani's entry into Kashmir with his entourage of three hundred disciples worked as a catalyst<sup>(101)</sup>. Sikandar respected him as a servant respects his master and never failed to be tutored by him. Sikandar defeated the ruler of Udbhandapura and married his daughter Mera<sup>(102)</sup>. Sikandar's inner circle of advisors comprised Ladda raja, Vaidyasankara, Suhabhatta<sup>(103)</sup>. He had three sons from Mera. They were banished whereas Shobha Devi and her son Firoz enjoyed his affection.

Jonaraja takes pains to recount the ineffectiveness, so to say, of the various images. These were simply pieces of stone sculpture with hardly any vibration left in them. Instigated by Suhadeva, Sikandar took to iconoclastic excursions, freely indulging in their wanton destruction. Such dastardly acts on the part of Sikandar far exceeded the turbulence of the Lavanyas and Dulcha's wholesale loot and massacre of the people—Martanda, Vijayesa, Isana, Cakrabhrt, Tripuresvara et al felt his wrath and were totally demolished. Suresvari, Varaha and other icons met the same fate. Hardly was a village, a town or or *pattana* spared by him<sup>(104)</sup>. A vigorous campaign of conversion started and *jaziya* (poll tax) was imposed on the people

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100 Ibid v 568 ff

101 Ibid vv 568 ff.

102 Ibid vv 577.

103 Ibid v 585.

104 Ibid vv 601 ff



who perforce had to bid adieu to their previous faith. Opposition, no doubt was stubborn, But how did it matter. Simhabhatta and Kastuta were a few exceptions. Sri Nirmalacarya<sup>(105)</sup> sacrificed his all and other devout brahmans braved all threats. They scoffed all offers of allurements with dignity and honour and spurned all advances and threats of conversion. Jonaraja, in his own characteristic way, equates the crime of a servant with that of his master and holds them both guilty. One may ask? Was it again a prescription of fate in which Jonaraja had full faith<sup>(106)</sup>. But such a naive approach can hardly exonerate Sikanadar from blame for his wanton acts of vandalism and inhuman behaviour. All this wanton mischief and destruction shows how he moved capriciously, having little regard for the creation of the Almighty. Proud and overbearing, he seems to be nothing short of a brute—a Lucifer of the Dark Age in Kashmir. He breathed his last in Laukika 4489/A.D. 1417.

#### **Ali Shah A.D. 1413-1419<sup>(107)</sup>**

Ali Shah, who succeeded his father, Sikandar was the seventh ruler in the line of Shahmir. Suhabhatta during this period had virtually full control and was the Chief Minister of the Sultan. His orgiastic activities show how cruel he was. Vidyashankar was killed, Ladda Margapati and his sons were made captive<sup>(108)</sup>. Mohammad, fearing death, fled to Bhangila where he took shelter in the house of Govinda Khasa. The latter betrayed him and at the approach of Suhabhatta's men had him delivered to them as a prisoner. He was lodged in the Bahaurupa<sup>(109)</sup> fortress. One Shah named dasi and her sons freed him from the fortress<sup>(110)</sup>. This made Suhabhatta furious. He got the most popular Margesa killed.

105 Ibid vv 608, 610.

106 Ibid. Jonaraja explicitly states that because of the crime of Suhabhatta, Kala (the god of death or time) was offended with the Sultan. This supports the version of *Tabqat-Akbari* that the Sultan suffered from a terrible fever. Ferishta endorses this view, 466.

107 Ibid vv 613 ff.

108 Ibid vv 616-618, 622.

109 Ibid vv 628-631.

110 Ibid v 633.



Sikandar, had his son Firoz (from Shobhadevi), banished<sup>(111)</sup>. Firoz was joined by disgraced Mohammad. Suhabhatta despatched Gouraka and Ladda to face Mohmmad who was beaten in battle<sup>(112)</sup>. As a reward Laddaraja was made the commander-in-chief and Gaurabhata was put in command of Krama Rajya<sup>(113)</sup>. Suhabhatta surpassed the record of his master's atrocities. He persecuted brahmans and made their exit to other places impossible. Most of these Kashmiri brahmans immolated themselves, others rolled themselves down the precipice of hills<sup>(114)</sup>. Suhabhatta even regarded himself like the legendary Mihirakula at the sight of these bleeding brahmans done to death in tortuous ways. All family ties of father and son, brother and sister, mother and her children, were forgotten<sup>(115)</sup> : parental or filial. But Suhabhatta, a fiend, exceeded all limits of depravity and wickedness. He deprived the brahmans of their means of livelihood even. They were forced to beg for alms (in a most abject manner) at every household, with their dog like tongue protruding, waiting for a morsel of food. (Jona vv 654ff). Muslims did not fare any better. Malanodin (Mulla Noordin) was cast in prison. While Ali Shah was a nominal king, all the strings of power were in the hands of Suhabhatta. He had an eye on Shahi Khan. (Jain-ul-Abidin) too but could not harm him. Three or four years thus passed in the persecution of the brahmans, disparaging their holy books and hatching conspiracies. He met his end as a result of tuberculosis<sup>(116)</sup>.

Immediately after his death. Hansa and Gaurabhata took Laddaraja a prisoner. But the scales were soon turned in favour of Hansa. He had Laddaraja freed from confinement. Gaurabhata also

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111 Ibid v 645.

112 Ibid 647.

113 Ibid v 649.

114 Ibid v vv 652 ff.

115 This reminds us of a similar tragedy that befell Kashmiri Pandits: in 1990 while secretly fleeing their home under the most horrible scenes of persecution, man hunt and massacre of innocent men, women and children, being dubbed as quislings of the so-called Indian occupation of Kashmir. There is no such parallel record of pogrom in any part of civilised society of the modern world, not even in Saudi Arabia (the homeland of Muslims).

116 Ibid 677 ff.



was killed in battle. Shahi Khan, however, did not favour such perfidy and treachery. He got Hansabhata executed and was soon elevated to the post of a Yuvaraja. Ali Shah feeling insecure, preferred to proceed on haj rather than stay over as a passive spectator. Shahi Khan took over as the new Sultan under the name of Jain-ul-Abidin.

### **Jain-ul-Abidin (Zain-ul-Abidin) A.D. 1419**

Ali Shah conferred the title of Suratrana on Jain-ul-Abidin. The latter had his brother fully honoured, bestowing on him the precious jewels and a high breed of horses. He even accompanied him on the haj pilgrimage for two to three days.

### **Ali Shah A.D. 1419-1420**

Some evil-minded persons disheartened Alishah from undertaking an arduous journey to Mecca.

With the advent of autumn, he marched back to Srinagar alongwith Madra soldiers. Jain-ul-Abidin avoided blooshed and welcomed his brother back to Kashmir.

Jain-ul-Adidin left Kashmir alongwith some Thakkuras. Ali Shah's entry into Kashmir alongwith Madras did not augur well. The Turuskas exploited Kashmir and Mir Kesar was responsible for disaffection<sup>(117)</sup>. Ali Shah watched the scene like a mute spectator. Women were harassed and molested; anarchy replaced order and economic stability. The Sultan lost his resources to Yavanas<sup>(118)</sup>.

Jasaratha envied Khokkars. He took courage to invite Jain-ul-Abidin to Kashmir. Instigated by his disloyal followers, Ali Shah decided to attack Jasratha and was promised help both by the Raja of Rajauri and Mahendra Khokkar. The moment Ali Shah reached Mudgra Vyala (perhaps Thatta)<sup>(119)</sup>, the Raja of Madra cautioned him against the guerrilla tactics of Khokkars and warned him of any move down the hills. However the over-confident but timid advisors suggested a

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117 Ibid vv 720-723.

118 Ibid v 726.

119 Ibid vv 740ff. Thatta is perhaps in the Punjab.



surprise attack on Jasaratha. The moment Ali Shah descended the hill, the guerrilla trained Khokkars attacked and defeated Ali Shah who was killed in action (*bhagna*). The victorious Jain-ul-Abidin triumphantly marched to Kashmir *mandala*<sup>(120-121)</sup>.

### Restoration of Jain-ul-Abidin A.D. 1420-1470<sup>(122)</sup>

Jain-ul-Abidin's (Zain-ul-Abidin) coronation and restoration to power sounded the death knell of his enemies. In more than two hundred verses Jonaraja is seen at his best in using similes and metaphors to highlight the significance of his reign. Attributing the change again to the law of *karma* peoples' intelligence got purified and the enemies lost their bravado. 'The kingdom of heaven seems to open on a parched land, torn by strife, dissension and treachery.' Jonaraja waxes eloquent, perhaps to open his real heart that is now the opposite of a saddist. He emerges as a karma-yogi with full faith in the divine that brings a spark of light in an otherwise overpowering environment of gloom. 'Does not the advent of spring give a new lease of life to the creepers blighted by winter.'

Jain-ul-Abidin's brother, Mohammad, proved worthy of his trust. A steadfast friend, wise in counsel, expert in statecraft and liberal in religious matters, he soon won the confidence of the Sultan. Jain-ul-Abidin still looked lovingly to Jasaratha. He won the confidence of his people who fully cooperated with him in bringing the guilty to book and in eradicating evil. Anarchy almost came to an end<sup>(123)</sup>. The Sultan's stern measures against the refractory and insurrectionary elements bore fruit.

The Sultan followed a liberal policy towards the Hindus, particularly the brahmans and yogis. He tried to soften the attitude of the fundamentalists. Rebels were firmly dealt with. And justice was

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120 Ibid vv 746 ff.

121 Ibid v 751.

122 Ibid vv 753-976: As a detailed account of Jain-ul-Abidin's reign is covered in these verses of Jonaraja, it is not necessary to list or repeat his achievements separately under a series of footnotes for which relevant information is available in the same book from verses 753 onwards.

123 Jona vv 763-764.



gradually restored. None was spared the rod of *danda*, be he a collateral, a minister or even his own son. He tried to follow the path of virtue and brought the guilty and corrupt to book. Many instances are cited of his even-handed justice. Punishments aimed at reforming the criminals.

A brahman's cow had strayed into Madava rajya (Maraz). Once the cow was restored to its owner, the other guilty brahman was punished with *bhanda danda*<sup>(124)</sup> (the punishment of being paraded as a buffalo with leather straps attached to his drum to entertain the spectators). In another case of a brahman having sold one prastha of land out of ten, the forgery of nine prasthaas in the sale deed was detected the moment the birch bark document was tested in water. *Kali's matsya nyaya* was brought to an end. Maulana Isak was made to surrender bribes he had taken. He had the committing of all sorts of local crimes and thefts in a particular area fixed upon the local residents of that place like Sher Shah Suri at a later date. The locals and forest dwellers were held accountable for all such types of offences. The cremation grounds forcibly occupied by Dombas were restored to brahmans. The Dombas were made to execute their usual practice of cremation discarded in the time of Suhabhata.

The Sultan reversed the policy of Sikandar and Suhabhata. As a result of their repressive policy, the land had been deprived of the services of physicians and surgeons. What brought the change of heart in the Sultan? A malady not easy to cure.

Once Siri-Bhatta was granted the right of life, he undertook the surgical operation of the Sultan who complained of excruciating pain caused by a boil (now diagnosed as malignancy). Siri Bhatta refused to accept all rewards; instead he secured exemption in Jazia (Poll tax), remitted to the minimum<sup>(125)</sup>, brahmans were required to pay one *masha* silver only (v. 817). Subsequent association with highly cultured

124 Ibid v 770: 775 ff; also v 794.. Such a punishment of being displayed as (insultingly futile action of) a comedian was meant to bring him to derision.

125 Ibid 801 ff: 961; 818 ff; Jona vv 812 ff. (During the reign of Ali Shah Hindus had to pay twelve (12) tolas silver as Jaziya. Jain-ul-Abidin could not totally remit the tax for fear of the opposition of the orthodox and the charge of heresy.



and intellectual class of brahmins—Siri bhatta, Jonaraja and others worked as catalysts in transforming the Sultan.

In sharp contrast to the brutality of Sikandar, Jain-ul-Abidin's affirmation of humanity was visible in all spheres of life. Patronage was thus a means of appreciating the craft of writing. Hindus had lost all means of livelihood. There were no *agraharas* to feed them, a copyist (or scribe) was no longer required, any type of literature in Sanskrit was an anathema to Muslims now practice of any *ayurveda* was meaningless. Entry into the army was totally banned. Jain-ul-Abidin liberalized the norms of recruitment. Tilakacarya (a Baudha) got the post of Mahatma (a secretary?).

Accounts went to Siribhatta. Tikka, Sinha, Karpura Bhatta became his aides (a sort of body guard). Sadhyabhhatta was placed in charge of some calculation work based on astrology and astronomy. Ruyyabhhatta had some similar work. Looking eagerly to the traditions and practices of a Sarsda mandala, the Sultan seems to have encouraged its revival. Sri Ramananda wrote a *bhasya* (a commentary on *Mahabhasya*), a Sarada copy of which had been lost by now. A registration department to register sale deeds, previously done on birch bark was established. perhaps with a Persian section also.

Jonaraja speaks highly of the exploits of the Sultan. The *Saranga* bow of Visnu and the *Ajagava* bow of Sankara were not as powerful as that of the Sultan. He entered into friendly alliances with Gandhara. Sindhu, Madra rulers. He defeated the Raja of Rajapuri and made Udbhandapura acknowledge his suzerainty. He vanquished both Bhauttas and the land of Ghoggas and conquered Saloot<sup>(126)</sup>. Nusrat Laddaraja's son, accused of treason, was not hanged but banished from the land<sup>(127-128)</sup>. Nor was his property attached by the Sultan. Jonaraja talks of the eight Vasus and indirectly refers to the earth, space, etc., suggesting at the same time how the sun of glory removes darkness. He tells us of many scholars and artists coming to Kashmir. Sadullah

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126 Ibid 831 ff.

127 Jona v839

128 Ibid vv 841 ff



from Mecca brought him a number of books and had Jain-ul-Abidin instructed, perhaps, in religious literature. Disappointed, it did not take long for the Sultan to follow him and see through his want of true scholarship.

A highly disciplined Yogiraja arrived in Kashmir during this period and through his blessing, the Sultan begot a son. His rising popularity was an eye sore for Sadullah. He shot the Yogi from his bows. Though advised to hang him, the Sultan, instead had him disgraced in the public. His beard was soaked in urine (of human beings), he was seated on a donkey, chained and hand-cuffed and was paraded through the city. People freely spat on him, humiliating him all the way in the capital.

The Sultan was married to the daughters of Madra-rajya. He had four sons : Adam Khan, Haji Kha. Jasrat Khan and Bahram Khan<sup>(129-130)</sup>.

To Sultan Jain-ul-Abidin goes the credit of building a number of towns, laying of irrigation canals and other public utility services. A canal in Utpalapura<sup>(131)</sup>, another on the Pahar river and many more like Nandshail, Cakradhara. Krala, Avantipura were dug out for inland irrigation and possibly for navigation too. Jonaraja does not fail to compliment the Sultan for turning the Earth Goddess to a River Goddess<sup>(132-133)</sup> as a benefactress for the poor toiling peasants and agricultural labour. He next bestowed *agrarahas* on brahmans. Indra was put to shame when the Sultan established free kitchens (*satradana*) for the needy and the poor at Vijayaksetra. Varah-ksetra, Surapura<sup>(134)</sup> (beyond Rambi-ara). His other construction activities include Jainpuri in Karala Pargana, Saphala, dotting of Sarika Parbata upto Amaresh (Amburhar) with *mathas*, *agrarahas* and stalls. Jain nagari was founded across Sopore. He had Sidhapuri constructed as

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129 Ibid vv 846 ff

130 Ibid vv 857 ff

131 Ibid vv 861

132 Ibid vv 862 ff

133 Ibid vv 879

134 Ibid vv 881. Surapura (Hurpor) and Vijayaksetra (Vijbror) are in south Kashmir and Varahksetra falls in North Kashmir.



capital in Suresvari. Many lofty buildings were raised in Martanda and Amarnatha<sup>(135-136)</sup>.

To Yavanas (Sic : brahmans-cum-buddhists) he donated *viharas* and *agraraharas*. These donations probably refer to such Buddhists who had been left over or had been hiding in places of safety after a campaign of forcible conversions and persecution in the land.

The Sultan seems to have been sufficiently rewarded even by those who had been badly affected by the policy of the previous Sultans. He obtained copper from copper mines and had coins minted. Jainamani was the name of those precious stones obtained from mines. Gold *pippilikas* (gold digging ants) and the professional labourers associated with them were encouraged. Gold was extracted from sand. Gold miners were charged one sixth of the revenue on that account. The earth also produced other gems for him.

Other building activities of the reign are mostly associated with those that served under the Sultan. Kanca Damara, the city prefect, had a stone embankment constructed over nearly two miles in the heart of the city. Siribhatta had *mathas* constructed in parganas, and other secretaries of the king opened dharmasalas (sarais or inns) in several *visayas* (called *Janapadas* and *desas* by Panini)<sup>(138-139)</sup>.

Sultan's maid-servant's sons were Masood and Sura. Being temporarily reconciled, the latter resigned from military service. Having availed himself of an opportunity, he had Masood Thakur killed, when the latter during a nocturnal excursion was caught unawares and unarmed with his attendants on one of the streets in Srinagar. The Sultan having refused to give him capital punishment, he was killed by Vinna Thakur under a similar situation. Thakkuras were thus pacified. The Sultan's policy of moderation was appreciated by all as one that tried to avoid internal feuds. The Madra rulers seem to have been

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135 Ibid vv 883-884

136 Ibid vv 885-886: Sultan's liberality won him even the support of day labourers.

137 Ibid vv 887

138 Ibid vv 889 (Refer to the Sultan's building activities in the text)

139 Panini IV-1 : 168-177 (Refer to the Sultan's building activities in the text)



offended by his too much of respect for yogis. Could it be attributed to Sultan's affection for the miraculous powers of the Yogis and their freedom from envy?<sup>(140-142)</sup> They seem to have given him a second birth. He is said to have participated in a number of religious discourses. With advancing years he was all the more drawn towards the scriptures and would often listen to the *Nilamata Purana* and *Yogavasistha*. Impressed by the holiness of Mahapadmasara, the Sultan had Jain bank constructed. As Jonaraja puts it: 'The earth is like the mouth and Kashmir mandala the eyes of a person, the peaks of the Himalayas (Parbatraja) are its wings; Mahapadmasara is the starry sky and Mahapadmasada its brother'<sup>(143)</sup>. Such an affection for this lovely lake seems to have often attracted Sultan Jain-ul-Abidin to visit it quite frequently. Jonaraja observes: *A sadhaka* would attain *siddhi* if he practices penance in the midst of the holy land (*mahasthala*) of Ullolasara (Wular)<sup>(144)</sup>. Had this anything to do with Jainalank? Whatsoever the reasons, the Sultan did not stop short of his building activities: Sultanpura (Suratranapura), Jain Kota, Jainpattana, Jainakundala. Besides, this, he repaired many other dilapidated buildings of note through his most reputed artist Ruyya bhandapati<sup>(145)</sup>.

The Sultan seems to have revived the council of Ministers (Amatya Parisad)<sup>(146)</sup> that lay quite long defunct during the period of the previous Sultans.

His last days were not happy. Mohammad Khan. Thakkur Mahim. Vinna. Siribhatta, left him earlier—almost dying one after another<sup>(147)</sup>. This must have made him very sad, deprived as he was of sincere counsellors. He maintained the practice of charity. He is said to have distributed one crore *dinaras* (golden ashrafris) to children on one

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140 Jona Just as wrestlers give up wrestling once they are recognised as true wrestlers in the field.

141 Ibid 891: 897-899

142 see *Tabqat-i-Akbari*

143 Jona vv 908-912

144 Ibid vv 939-940

145 Ibid vv 946 ff

146 Ibid v 958

147 Ibid v 967 ff



single day, through Jayabhatta<sup>(148)</sup>.

Jonaraja says that extraordinary things were collected during his reign which accounts for his (Sultan's) being a re-incarnation of Narayana. He turned the fury of the Sindhu nadi (the Indus) which inundated large tracts of agricultural land into one that turned the fortune of the agriculturists into surplus producers. Before joining, the Vitasta the Sindu nadi was diverted from Tulamula, into various canals and streams for the good of the cultivators. Through His *yogamaya*, the Sultan was nothing short of Srimad-darsananatha—the Protector of dharma. That is how Jonaraja's account ends here. He could not finish the remaining years of the Sultan's life, as he died earlier. He passed away in the month of Jyestha in A.D. 1459.

## Conclusion

Sultan Jain-ul-Abidin must have been on the throne of Kashmir barely for a few years when he was struck by a dreadful disease that could not be cured by his own physicians. Siribhatta, a Kashmiri Pandit surgeon, had gone to some unknown place of safety for his life. Assured of full protection, he undertook the treatment of Sultan's (malignant) boil and restored him to health. He refused to accept any money for restorative medicine and instead, begged for a humane treatment of those that were left screeching in unknown places of shelter. Most of the people who had gone into hiding came out when Siribhatta not only gained the confidence of the Sultan but was made one of the most trustworthy ministers, holding the charge of finance. It was at his behest that Jonaraja started his work sometime in A.D. 1455 and completed it in A.D. 1459, recording even the death of his patron, Siribhatta. From the account of Srivara, it is clear that he passed away in Laukika 4535 = A.D. 1459, corresponding to the Saka era of 1381 Jonaraja chronicled events in order of their occurrence and left the remaining eleven years of the Sultan's reign, to be recorded and completed by Srivara. Unlike, Kalhana<sup>(149)</sup> whose narrative was meant to serve as a medicine for the future kings to come, Jonaraja in his

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148 Ibid v 973; 976

149 Strin. RT 1-21



*rupakalamkara*, clearly points out how the infatuation of the previous Sultan's (obliquely referring to Sikandar in particular) had brought ruin and misery the heat of which the future kings (like Jain-ul-Abidin) would remove in the form of a *Kavyadruma* (*Kalpadruma*)<sup>150</sup>. The trees would bear fruit and mitigate the intensity of such heat by providing shade and coolness against the blistering heat of the previous Sultans' policy of repression and persecution. Unlike Kalhana. Jonaraja's *Rajatarangini* was meant to give repose, (*svanta sukha*) as if in the form of Gangajala (the water of the Ganges) that would bring tranquillity and cessation of all unnecessary excitement.

The incoming of the Arabs. Persians. Turks and others inspired his technique of writing. Jonaraja narrates events in order of their actual occurrence and succession. Since most of the people had been forcibly converted to Islam, his main focus was on the high class brahmans of the land. This accounts for his overlooking the social and economic life of other sections of the society. In the narration of events, he leaves the judgement to his readers. He has no role of a critic to play. Like Brecht, a dramatist of several centuries later, he wants to have the empathy of those that study him. He was impartial. He never betrayed any untoward bias or prejudice. This is very clear from the invocatory verse of the *Rajatarangini* addressed to Ardhanarisvara wherein he prays to the lord to generate good will for all. Siva, locked in close embrace to Parvati, absorbs the evil. Although he too would not ordinarily wish to change the stored merit and demerit of a person but would positively like to remove the unnecessary rivalry and jealousy caused by distrust (and enmity of one community against the other for no fault of theirs). If the change in the fortune of the people is the direct outcome of their *karma*, Jonaraja would simply pray that the rivalry between pleasure and pain (caused by repression and persecution) were to cease for the common weal of all and the bloody drama were to end soon. (this being the import of his invocation).

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150 Jona V8: There is *rupaka alamkara* in *kalpadruma*

**Note :** *Rasas* are states of feelings. *Srngara* is the state of love, 'santa' the state of peace. *Santa*, *srngara* and *raudra* are three states of feelings, denoting the three fundamental aspects of the reality of nature: *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. For the meaning and role of *rasas* see P.V. Kane *History of Sanskrit Poetics*.



His approach is not traditional. He does not overburden his narrative with religion, culture, tantra, mantra, different ideologies or philosophical constructs. The narration of events follows a natural course without any previous background. Just as an image reflects the three worlds, likewise the chronicle narrates the qualities and achievements of rulers and thereby mirrors the social and economic structure of the times. Though a *Kavya*, it truly unfolds the *rasa*<sup>(150m)</sup>, sentiment, thought and amusing situations in their right perspective. The *kavya* is directly linked to the head and heart of the reader. Kota Rani's predicament and Jain-ul-Abidin's live and unsullied pictures are, instead, moving scenes on the screen of what goes on and passes by like the currents of an ocean or a river. *Alamkaras* and metaphors are used at proper places; *slesa alamkara* is the most pre-eminent. "Does not Lokesa (the sustainer of the earth) express *karuna* for a faultless raja, as opposed to a wicked ruler, in the same way as the sunrise dispels darkness or spring removes the severity of a blizzard" / "A lustrous king, possessing the elements of eight lokapalas removes the evil of Kali's *matsya nyaya* (miscarriage of justice in the iron age)". "Just as the sun's splendour dazzles in the cluster of stars, likewise the might of a *raja* can be felt and experienced only by strong rulers." "Just as a traveller stumbles across an oasis in the desert, similarly the Sultan's well-wishers found the Garudasastra expert, Siribhatta." "Just as an elephant tramples the tree of poison, so did Siribhatta uproot the boil." Jonaraja's knowledge of *Jyotisa*, *ayurveda*, yoga, etc. is clearly reflected in the similes and metaphors used by him. His commentary on *Kiratarjuniya* of Bharavi (a Mahakavya) is an excellent ex-position. How artistically he uses all the nine-*rasas*, *alamkaras* and other figures of speech shows his complete mastery over Sanskrit and its nuances. To elucidate the point, we once again turn to his *Rajatarangini*. A very important event of Jain-ul-Abidin's reign. Jonaraja records quite faithfully how the Sultan's wish to visit Sarada (the principal seat of Goddess Sarasvati and a place of pilgrimage for all the devout Hindus) was both a pleasant and unpleasant experience. Having made all arrangements, for the Sultan's stay at the holy shrine, the entourage seems to have camped in its



vicinity—the forest-clad mountains and the Kishenganga flowing below it. Assured of the goddess visiting him in a dream, the Sultan seems to have been disappointed not to be favoured with the fulfilment of such a wish. Broken promises are punished for simply glorifying in vain what cannot be achieved by *yogis* and *siddhas* even without true devotion and meditation. Disappointed, the Sultan, in the early hours of the following morning, had the *devi (sila)* (the stone-slab covering the spring) smitten twith his club. Grief-stricken though, Jonaraja did not like to hurt the feelings of the Sultan for this profane act. Using a figure of speech, he writes, "The *devi (sila)* (शिला) felt so ashamed of her failed promise that she smote/splitted herself into two parts by turning upside down." What actually Jonaraja wants to convey is how the Sultan, disappointed at failure, struck the *sila* with his club causing it to split into two parts. Such an impudence could hardly be forgiven. What option had Jonaraja therefore, but to communicate this incident by using a figure of speech to bring home the point to its readers, without directly blaming the Sultan. See verses (Jonaraja : Srikantha Kaul, Visvesvaranand Institute Hoshiarpur, 1967). This was the only way of censuring the Sultan's conduct. Did the Sultan have a distressing but instructive experience of something that he could not so easily accomplish. Did he still have some residue (*malu*) left of an unrefined intellect (*dhi*) not to deserve divine grace? (Refer to Jonaraja Rajatarangini pp. 21, 146-149, vv in the footnotes 1055-1073, 10767 (55, Laukika 4498A.D. 1422)

There are many other verses which indirectly reflect, if studied critically, the milieu of the times Jonaraja lived in. A critical study of the source material, including the Persian sources is sure to throw light on important aspects of the social polity of this period, either deliberately ignored or obscured. Most importantly the reader has to study the use of various figures of speech used by Jonaraja in his narrative.

Jonaraja could not fail to notice what was wrong with the times. But how to express this all. He simply talks of the remission of the *Jaziya* but not its incidence. This would obviously suggest that the Sultan, unlike Akbar at a later time, could not set-up a secular polity,



either for fear of opposition at the court or too much indulgence towards those that could not join the army. If the right to life was guaranteed, what else could a deprived class of his subjects expect from him. Jonaraja could very well feel the temper of his age and the limitations imposed by it. The Hindus could not seek total relief of this nuisance.

In the commentary parts of *Prithvirajavijaya* (a *Caritakavya*) Jonaraja closely watches the points of strength and weakness of the Rajputs. He is struck by the valour of Prithviraja and the formation of his armed forces, but is quite dismayed by the lack of a united front against an adversary whose tactics the Rajputs, as a whole, failed to understand. Instead of rising to the occasion and uniting their ranks, the Rajputs, as a whole, was a divided lot that failed to understand the need to devise various instruments of war strategy. Petty squabbles ruined their chances of vanquishing a common foe in the end. Added to it was their failure to strengthen their espionage system to break the might of a warrior whose forces were very well disciplined and united in a cause, but in no way superior. *Prithvirajavijaya* shows an uncommon insight of Jonaraja in manoeuvres. That the Rajputs should fight a battle like a tournament was most distressing. It was a pyrrhic victory for the great Rajput hero.

In *Srikanthacarita* of Mankha Jonaraja again reveals his knowledge of statecraft and, like Kautilya of an earlier date, seems to be well acquainted with war strategy. His description of Srinagar dwells on the grandeur of the city and a free society, and the pre-occupation of its elite with the performance of *yajnas* and the chanting of Vedic mantras in almost all households. Equally interesting is the account of Srikantha to which the major portion of the work is dedicated. One is impressed with the achievements of Srikantha and how people react to different situations in life. The use of similes and metaphors makes the commentary a masterpiece.

His diction, as referred to elsewhere, is superb and hardly is there a word or an expression that does not clearly indicate the right choice of words.



## A Mahakavya par excellence

For all intents and purposes the work of Jonaraja is a *Mahakavya* (though he himself calls it a *kavya*). A Mahakavya contains *vira*, *sringararasa*, including other *rasas* too. If satire has any part to play, then surely *santa rasa* pervades the work of Jonaraja. Good and bad rulers follow like the currents of a river or an ocean and all is just an illusion, a mere phantom : One comes across *sringara-rasa* in the description and depiction of Kota Rani. Thus all the *rasas* have their express place in this *Mahakavya*.

If the aim of an epic is to narrate continuously the achievements of one or more heroes like the *Iliad* or *Paradise Lost*, Jaina *Rajatarangini* surely fulfils such conditions. Jonaraja's *Rajatarangini* does not fall short of the same basic approach.

If *santa rasa* pervades the work of Kalhana, *karuna rasa* permeates the *Rajatarangini* of Jonaraja. The Hindu culture was eclipsed by the onslaught of Muslim fanaticism and bigotry. A bloody holi (festival of colours) of persecution, self immolation and senseless atrocities had overwhelmed the old order. Jonaraja was almost moved to tears to witness such a spectacle of merciless cruelty and a reign of terror being unleashed on a gullible and simple people wedded to traditions of a self restrained life of austerity. People were forcibly converted to Islam as the chronicles of *Baharistan -i-Shahi* and *Tuhfat-ul-Ahbab*, of perhaps a later date, testify to these facts, glorifying all the way the achievements (sic misdeeds) of Islam in glowing terms. Jonaraja takes the shelter of *karunika deity* and his whole work is replete with *karuna rasa*. This characteristic feature that he shares with Bhavabhuti is in no way less effective. Having referred to an event even by a mere suggestion, he then turns to the chain of other events: Having tried his hand at the commentaries of *Prithvirajavijaya*, *Kiratarjuniya* and *Sri Kanthacarita*, his mature mind turned to the writing of *Rajatarangini*. All the three qualities of a *Sarasvata* (one initiated in learning), *Abhyasika* (a trained practitioner) and *anupadesika* (one made chaste through moral lessons) are continually present in his mature composition of the



*Rajataragini*. His life itself exemplifies all the three characteristics of such a figure. He enjoyed the blessings of *Sarasvati* (the goddess of learning), had the rich experience of being taught by scholars of repute (*abhyasa*) and the high values of his unknown teachers (their *upadesas*). The flow of his ideas and sequence of events follows a natural course like the currents and waves of an ocean. The glossary or vocabulary is not borrowed or imitated. His contribution is original. He does not exhibit unnecessary emotions, anger or pleasure, envy or jealousy. He is self restrained and calm. He simply watches the flow of life. He never disparages the deeds of Sikandar Butshikan. Ali Shah, Sahabhatta in any form of their fanaticism or as persecutors of their people. He doesn't in any way. transgress the tradition of poets and their unflinching support to truth and objectivity. His Kavya is embellished with all literary qualities; it has a Pauranic and historical base. It is imaginative and romantic; *rupatmaka* (allegorical) and *svacchandatmaka* (naturally and freely expressed). He does not compromise historical facts. His integrity is above reproach.

### Historical Kavya

A historical kavya is generally classified as *caritakavya* (biographical) and *prasasti kavya* (laudatory verse). *Caritakavya* is confined to a particular ruler whereas a *prasastikavya* is related to a particular dynasty or to a particular family of kings. Jonaraja's kavya attempts a wonderful synthesis of what characterizes a true kavya : *rasa*, *bhava* (idea), *vicara* (reflection), *camatkara* (mirabile dictu) and *parihasamulaka* (amusing/comic). His *Rajatarangini* gives us a glimpse of all the four ideas and intellect are so intermingled as to complement each other *Upama* (a figure or speech / simile), *Utpreksa* (a figure of speech). *Atisayokti* (exaggeration) *Sadrshyamulaka Alamkara* (Figure of speech) have been appropriately used in the body of the text. They have a natural place in their proper context. Nothing is imposed or thrust upon.

### Style

As his *slesaulmkara*, predominates, who would deny his versatility and genius as a literary figure of his time, outstanding in all



respects. It is a time of dismaying turbulence and turmoil. But Jonaraja is not swayed by any emotional outburst. He maintains his cool, not in any way ruffled. He extols the virtues of a righteous king in the same vein as he exposes the deeds of the wicked. He does not use any slang. He presents life as it is; his characters are not larger than life. There is no *kavya dosa* in his work. The secondary perspective of glory, expediency, day-to-day activity knowledge and averting the evil follows the main objective. If a composition doesn't display proper *rasa*, it loses its appeal, Jonaraja's *kavya* may not be as inspiring as those of a Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti, Bharavi, Bana, Bhasa, Magha, et al, it nevertheless is a historical *magnum opus*, in no way inferior to those that preceded him. An inspiring ideal of his *kavya* is the way the actors are presented, both good and evil. The *rajakatha* is narrated seriously, without any exaggeration here and there. He shows how a Kashmir of eclectic views and tolerance was being replaced by a new one, caught in bigotry and held in the thralldom of the Sayeed and fanaticism of the clergy. It was what it was and not what it should have been.

There is dignity (गरिमा) in his style, the *padas* of his verses contain propriety (*auchitya*) and are marked by grandeur (*pratibha*). *Rasas alamkaras* and *padas* are full of life; they are not dead wood. Jonaraja's *Rajatarangini* is a Mahakavya. It is a metrical composition devoted mainly to historical personages, in no way inferior to the work of Kalhana. It has its own place in the historical literature of India, unlike *Harsacarita* or *Prithviraja-raso*. His style and technique are blended to perfection. The historical tradition of Kashmir has not suffered any change.

### A period of transition and moral decay

Jonaraja talks of a transitional phase. New norms and new methods were replacing the old ones. The society as a whole was convulsed by the seizure of a new faith. A Kashmiri was strictly speaking, neither a Hindu nor a Muslim. He was an admixture of the two. He still adhered to his old style of life. His traditional base remained untouched. His ritualistic beliefs did not suffer much change. Music,



drama and participation in some of the old festivals still continued. Only the temple, *sanctum sanctora* was gone; the symbol of idolatry was destroyed. But the cultural roots were still there. Nagas or springs still continued to be places of his meditation and reverence. Paddy fields were still emblems of an old social structure. These would be worshipped with a *thali* of turmeric (coloured rice) with the onset-of a harvesting season. Even the holy verses were recited with a Kashmir accent. Folk tales and folk songs and instrumental music stayed as before. We read of Sultan's samgeet sabhas<sup>(m-152)</sup> and an extraordinary interest shown by his sons and grandsons in music.

A degenerate aristocracy succumbed to the viles of 'central Asian beauties'. Added to it, the regular feuds of the Damaras, Lavanyas and others had their pernicious effect on the society as a whole. While Kashmir was caught in the meshes of a rotten social order—falling to pieces—an ordinary Kashmiri, was plagued by the frequent court intrigues and battle arrays of the nobles. A clear divide between an alien Muslim and a local Kashmiri Muslim worsened the situation further. The serious inroads of the Sayeeds and their access to power made Kashmiris all the more miserable. The Sayeeds rubbed salt into their wounds. The spread of Islam, on the outskirts of Kashmir doesn't seem to have been seriously taken note of. A strife-torn state, the Damaras, Lavanyas and other warring groups often engaged in deadly combats, caused by their petty jealousies and shrunken resources of income, shook its very roots. Kings and queens, being totally dependent on their feodal levies were further embarrassed by its depleted forces and disloyal nobility, ready to charge and change their own master at will. To kill a raja was not a crime<sup>(151)</sup>.

If Sikandar's policy of repression was the contretemps of his ugly reign, Jain-ul-Abidin's policy of liberalism and tolerance was like a 'halo that radiated light in all directions enveloped in gloom.' Jonaraja had a very unpleasant task of recording acts of violence and intemperance without any bias. He did not fail to notice that witchcraft, black magic, poisoning through cunning and mutual distrust had seized

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151 Jona VV 95-101. To kill a raja was not a crime.



the Kashmiris who had lost all sources of income with the coming of a new regime. Kalhana's descendants wrought havoc and played a treacherous role, not in keeping with the traditions of their family.

Patriotic sentiments were absent. Tribal loyalties were still very strong, group loyalties ruled the roost, which further weakened any effective resistance to the opponents from within and enemies from without. Struck by discord and dissension, a Kashmiri (crushed by misfortune) failed to check the influx of the foreigners and depredation from across its hilly borders. The economy was totally crippled.

If one storm subsided, leaving a trail of death and destruction behind it; the other uprooted almost all. Kashmiris by and large lost their identity and whatever value system they had. Islam came to stay with a local colour and vengeance. A Kashmiri was cheated into disbelief, little knowing who his gods were. He had to bow to the inevitable when the oarsman of the ship of the state was caught in squabbles and palace intrigues. His fate was sealed and resolution shattered beyond measure. Goblins had a nice day. Sooner or later Kashmir was bound to lose its independence and pass on to slavery. Strange indeed are the ways of Providence! Jonaraja lived in the midst of a storm. He actually saw treason, terror and treachery despoiling the image of Kashmir. He sat in quietude, remorseful but not resentful. Yet how distressed he must have been all the time to watch the rise and fall of destiny! "The evils of a (country), and its people were directly proportionate to the bad luck / fate / destiny of a Raja. Their "miseries were in admirable proportion to the accumulated *karma* of a king, his misfortune." That was the strong conviction of Jonaraja.

The valley was predominantly an agricultural land, just fertile enough to support the population. But its geographical position isolated the region from the inter-continental highway of trade and commerce.

Insularity of Kashmir may have been one of the factors that made its neighbours indifferent to her lot. Mostly ignorant of her topography, culture and inaccessibility because of its mountain ramparts, they could not come immediately to her rescue. Even if they had, it is doubtful whether Kashmir could have been saved because of the



rampant violence within. With its borders in the charge of hostile and disloyal Dvarapatis, it was simply a matter of time that Kashmir should fall. Damaras and Lavanyas hastened the process of a ramshackle state falling to pieces. Disgustingly dirty as their role was, a loose caste-system further degenerated the monarchy. Rulers did not hesitate to take Dombas, *dasis*, dancing girls and even concubines as their queens. This nasty illness did not spare the war-like groups of Damaras and Lavanyas either. Little did they understand that their very social fabric was shaken by this malady. "A *Visakanya* had entered their bed chamber accelerating the process of espionage and sabotage." This was a unique development in weakening any type of resistance. This dropsy killed all the tissues of their body and these sex maniacs were finished mercilessly.

Sri Kota<sup>(153)</sup> fought a valiant battle alone. But how could she escape the mortal coil<sup>(154)</sup>. How unfortunate and yet how brave! (And in her lifetime she had seen her own dynasty reduced to humiliating insignificance).

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152 Sultan's son Haidarshah and grandson Hassanshah were great masters of musical instruments.

153 Jonaraja talks of Kotadevi as Sri kota for her masculine vigour.

154 Shakespear. Hamlet, III, 1-67.

*(While every care has been taken to place the footnotes correctly, a few lapses here and there may kindly be overlooked)*



## APPENDIX 'A'

### Siriyabhatta

We have no statistics to determine the ratio of the converted Hindus to Islam to the general ratio of the overall population. If, however, the figure of 66,063 villages (a traditional number given in the *Lokaprakasa*) is to be believed, it is fairly certain that a large number must have still adhered to their old faith. The coming of the Sayyids in Kashmir, particularly of Mir Sayyid Mohd. Ali Hamdani (Stanzas 571, 573, *Kaul* also p.94) changed the equation for a catastrophic end. The *yavanas* (as the Sayyids were described by Jonaraja, subverted the traditions of Kashmir and spread like 'locusts destroying a paddy field'. A second batch of them (*stanza 576-Kaul*) followed shortly afterwards led by Sheikh Jalal-ud-din Bukhari (*Kaul*, p.95, see also *Tarikh-i-Sayyid Ali Kaul*, p.95. Those who resisted conversion were made to pay *jaziya* (poll-tax) (*Kaul* : stanzas 606, 662 ff.). The blood-thirsty Sultan Sikandar and his evil genius, Suhabhatta, forced most of the Hindus to flee land of their birth to seek shelter elsewhere. What a horrible and shocking scene of burning, hanging and drowning themselves (*ibid*-stanzas 657-659). We have, as gleaned from the narrative of Jonaraja, blood-curdling scenes of horror, persecution and oppression of those seeking death rather than dishonour in the land of their birth (*Ibid* stanzas 1137-1139). During a period of about a hundred years from the time of Rincana to that of Jain-ul-Abidin (A.D. 1320-1420), the Hindus suffered worst persecution. A reign of terror, indeed, following a campaign of proselytization and violence. Siriyabhatta too was a victim of such iconoclastic zeal and forcible conversions, that had led him to his hide-out. He brought some relief to his woe-stricken people and tried for a (their) respectable status. (*Kaul*-stanzas 824-825). Jain-ul-Abidin patronised them, as he seems to have owed his second-birth to Siriyabhatta. This policy of the Sultan patronising 'crowds of infidels and tribes of polytheists san..... *Kufra tawaif mushrikan*' has been condemned in *Baharistan-i-Sahi*, Ms.23a loc. cit. *Kaul*). In the *Tuhfat-ul-Ahbab* Jain-ul-Abidin has been called *bedin* (an infidel-Msf. 106a,



*Kaul, loc. cit*) Jonaraja clearly states that owing to the misdeeds (*duracara*) of *mlecchas*, both the efficacy of the *mantras* of brahmans and their devas had suffered to the utmost (stanzas-591ff. *Kaul* and fn. stanzas 747-760).

‘The *Yavanas* had destroyed the *acara* (moral code) of Kashmir like the strong winds destroying trees’ (*ibid* stanza-575)-brahmans reduced to abject slavery (*ibid* stanzas 666 ff (*Kaul*), recounting side by side the misdeeds of Suhabhatta-*Kaul*, stanzas 601 ff.)

Unexpectedly, the illness of Jain-ul-Abidin (not long after his coronation, perhaps) and a thorough search of ‘Siriabhatta’, an expert in Garudasastra, was a God-send blessing for the afflicted people. As per Jonaraja, perhaps it was pre-ordained through a turn of fortune. The Sultan’s miraculous escape from a malignant boil and recovery earned Siriabhatta the generosity of the king. Having spurned all offers of a largesse (*ibid* st. 816), the Sultan obliged Siriabhatta by recalling and resettling all the brahmans in Kashmir (B1047-p.146, *Kaul*). Whatever had been destroyed by Suhabhatta was got restored (*ibid* B1051) and all the sacrificial performances and Naga-yatras, stopped by Suhabhatta, revived. The land usurped by Turushkas and Yavanas also was restored to their owners (*Ibid* 1051-1053). This was no small achievement of a physician-cum-surgeon to have the Hindus restored to the land of their birth. Through Siriabhatta’s proclamation, as a result of the Sultan’s benevolence, all the restrictions on *dharmaprakasa* that had been imposed earlier, were removed through royal edicts (B1089-p.150, *Kaul, loc. cit*). In every pattan (town), the moral code of righteousness was proclaimed and revived (*ibid*-B1090). The Buddhist (*saugata*) Tilakcarya was elevated to the post of a *mahattam* (secretary). Thus were Siriabhatta, Tilaka, Simha and other brahmans elevated to high posts of honour and dignity (*Kaul*-stanzas 824-827) Ramananda’s commentary (padanam) on Bhasya) was revived. Jonaraja states that ‘just as the clouds of a *sadha*) torment the earth, so had the land been tormented by Suhabhatta’. The Sultan had all the exiled pandits brought back and restored through handsome allowances (*vritidanena*), And whatever



had been destroyed by Suhabhatta in Kashmir mandala, that too was restored through royal edicts (ibid-Kaul B1051, h. 146) or *rajaprarthana*. Once the host of exiled Hindus had been rehabilitated with honour, all the Yavanas were offended with Siriyabhatta (Ibid, B1053, p.146) whose policy of restoration and self-abnegation could find little favour with them. That they could not harm him was mainly due to being the protege of the Sultan. Siriyabhatta succeeded in having all the disabilities of the Hindus removed. Every year the Hindus had to pay two palas silver as *Jaziya* (*durdanda*) to protect their caste (*Jati*). This was a terrible punishment (*candodando*) for the brahmans. The liberal Sultan had it reduced to one masha silver again through the proclamation of Siriyabhatta. Through his efforts Vedic studies were patronised (Kaul-121, lines 86-87). Offenders were punished when their guilt was established against them. Already holding the charge of finance, Siriyabhatta was appointed the judge of a stationary court. He rose to the position of *Prad-vivaka* (one who interrogates and discriminates) in the position of the Chief Judge (Ibid-B1073(60), 148-loc.cit.). That the (Kashmir) mandala was freed from the abominable practice of beef-eating (cow's or buffalo's), the Sultan had the practice of weighing such beef stopped, it appears, again through the wise counsel of Siriyabhatta (Ibid-B1079, p.149). Suhabhatta had the tradition of learning the *Sastras* by children stopped. The Sultan had the services of the learned and the wise in reviving such learning for which they were adequately paid (*vrttidanena*). He had the *lotra danda* (punitive fine for booty and plunder/abolished in *pattalas*, *ghosas* and other places (ibid B1084). It seems that the inhabitants of these areas paid a kind of punitive fine for war booty, plunder, highway robbery in their neighbourhood. They were made to surrender their household belongings even to maintain the Prefectsof Police. It may have been a sort of feudal obligation to maintain the small units of armed bands at the expense of householders Siriyabhatta's regulation of tariff duties (Ibid B1086) helped the Sultan to undertake building activities and philanthropic work. The land that had been devastated by the misdeeds of Suhabhatta was gradually resotred to health. Through his exceptional judgement and experience, he seems



to have maintained a delicate balance between the refractory elements and the Sayyid's ambition for power. He knew how dangerous it was to antagonize them as they enjoyed plenitude of power both within and outside the royal circle. To keep on the razor-edge of orthodoxy and that too in a critical situation. Their presence in purlicus of Kashmir was quite challenging. Siriyabhatta was baware of what was happening in Kashmit but helpless to voice his feelings of resentment. Had not the times changed? To gain the favour of the Sultan and to have the situation remedied a little, was indeed, no small achievement of Siriyabhatta in an age of orthodoxy and wide-spread violence. Wave after wave of Sayyids were entering Kashmir—Mir Sayyid Muhammad followed by Sheikh Jalal-ud-din Bukhari and other Sayyids (see *Tarikh-i-Sayyid Ali*, Msf. 11<sup>a</sup>—Kaul, p.95, loc. cit.)

(All references are from Jonaraja's *Rajatarangini*, edited by Srikanth Kaul, Vishveshvarand Vedic Research Institute, Hoshiarpur, 1967).



## APPENDIX 'B'

### Goddess SARADA

Jonaraja's graphic description of Goddees Sarada (Kaul's ed. (1967) p. 147-148, vv 1056-1071) refers briefly to the conditions and circumstances under which the goddess is pleased to bestow her grace on the devotees. Sarada, after whom, Kashmir gets the name of Saradadesa, was one of the three principal seat of pilgrimages. Famed for its miraculous powers, the Sultan must have obviously expressed his desire to visit the shrine of Sarada. Why the Sultan (Jain-ul-Abidin) was disappointed and forced to break the idol of the goddess is referred to by Jonaraja in his characteristic way of using a figure of speech?

In the *Kaliyuga* (the Iron Age), Saradadevi agitated as it were, being touched by those eager to have her *darsan* surely concealed her true *swarupa* and disappeared. It caused the face to perspire, limbs to tremble and feet to burn when touched. When served with a portion of weath, obtained through a hostile dispositin, that goddees of Kashmir—*loka* (residing in Kashmir), did not bestow her grace. Gods are pleased with just (a few blades of) sacred durva grass, but not with a mind polluted by malice even though ready to serve with one's *pranas*. But even in the age of *Kali*, the devi loses that impact.....(*prabhava*) also. The Sultan (*nrpa*) repaired to Sarada, alongwith pilgrims to have her *darsana*. He had a bath in the Madhumati, and followed other percepts as ordained. In the *Sarada-ksetra* there was an assembly of brahmans who seem to have informed him of all propriety. The Sultan was distressed to see the evil-minded persons there and pilgrims lacking in true devotion that made the goddess angry. Even the gods (*devas*) find it difficult to have a face to face *darsana* of the goddees. We, polluted by *Kali-kala* (the age of *Kali*) should not aspire for it. One should just meditate upon her form and not draw close to her. The false devotees should stand at a distance. If the image cannot be approached too near, 'I (the Sultan) am sure to be graced by her *darsana* in a dream to get purified'. 'Why should the image be blamed by those who are hostile to Hindus?'



Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra is running planned training programme to make the youth self-dependent. The aim is to make the Kendra a multifaceted organisation. Thus the Kendra has imparted primary training in Electronics-Radio-T.V. assembling and repair to about hundred youths, in a one-year course programme. Presently these youths are either self-employed in the trade or have joined industry by the dint of this training.

Sharda Institute of Computer Education has been opened in the Kendra premises. The Institute trains students in different aspects of Computer Education and techniques through a variety of Computer Courses. Over 400 students have received computer training to date. The institute has a well-equipped Computer Laboratory. Sixteen Students are trained in one class at a time.

The Kendra has actively taken up research activities. To strengthen the cultural identity of Kashmiri Pandits, debates, lectures and seminars on archeology, history, philosophy, ethics, language, literature, script (Sharda) and folklore are being organized. Sharda Pustakalaya, a library has already been opened. A special section on Kashmir to house a comprehensive collection of books is envisaged under the auspices of the Pustakalaya. In the memory of the great Bhakti poet of Kashmir Pandit Krishnjoor Razdan, a hall dedicated to his memory was inaugurated on 15th September, 2007 on his 157th birth anniversary. This hall will house a state of art library. Seminar facilities shall also be provided in this hall.

The Kendra has organized several Samohik Yagneopavit Samaroh. So far Yagneopavit Sanskar of 124 children has been performed under the programme. The aim is to mobilize the community, increase the awareness as well as to discharge a social and religious obligation.

Under the Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra, Mohotsav Committee organizes the collective observance/performance of religious festivals. In this context Sharda Ashtami and Samohik Shivratri are two main festivals worth mentioning. People from all walks of life participate in these programme, and benefit there from. Accomplished saints and



well-versed scholars are invited in these programmes to enlighten the public. In addition to holding a Yagnya, two personages devoted to community cause and service are honoured on Sharda Ashtami with Sharda Puraskar. So far 12 persons have been so honoured as an acknowledgement of community's gratitude. A calendar is released to the public on the occasion of Maha Shiva Ratri.

Teaching and popularizing the original script of Kashmir Sharda is one of the committed activities of Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra. Classes are held off and on for the purpose. Occasional arrangements are made for imparting training in Sanskrit including spoken Sanskrit.

In furtherance of efforts in preservation of culture and ethos publication of books on various aspects has been undertaken. Two monographs "Sharda" and "Herath-Akh-Zaan" have already been published in the Sharda Granth Mala Series. Two more monographs "Kshemendra" and "Umanagri" have been released on ShardaAshtami (11<sup>th</sup> September 2005). Prof. Bushan Lal Koul's "Parmanand" has also been released. The books on "Krishen Joo Razdan" by Prof. B.L.Koul and on "Lalleshwari" by Prof. Chaman Lal Raina was released on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2007 (During Shivratri 'Samohik Programme'). The work on the publication of other titles is in progress. The publication division has also brought out introductory sheets on Shriya Bhatt, Lalitadatya and Guru Teg Bahadur, .

A picture gallery is being developed in which the photographs of saints as well as eminent men and women of Kashmir will be displayed. Already thirty such photographs have been installed. Prof. T.N Shalla, President of the Kendra evinced a keen interest in the creation of this picture gallery without his inspiration it would have not materialised.

From last year a scholarship named 'Mohani Jnan Arjan' scholarship has been awarded to three meritorious girls who excelled in studies despite financial constraints. Special cash award was given to them under this scholarship.

The Kendra is planning to start a lecture series in different



parts of the state in which light will be thrown on the various aspects of culture and social life of Kashmiri Pandits. The aim is to connect the young people of the community to the age-old traditions and customs.

Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra is run by a registered trust under whose direction all activities are conducted by an executive headed by an elected Chairman. Several committees have been formed to look after the different activities in a systematic manner. The committees are:

1. Vocation Training Committee
2. Social Reform and Cultural Committee
3. Construction and fund Committee
4. Festival Committee



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**Ancient Temple of Goddess Sharda at Shardi (POK)**